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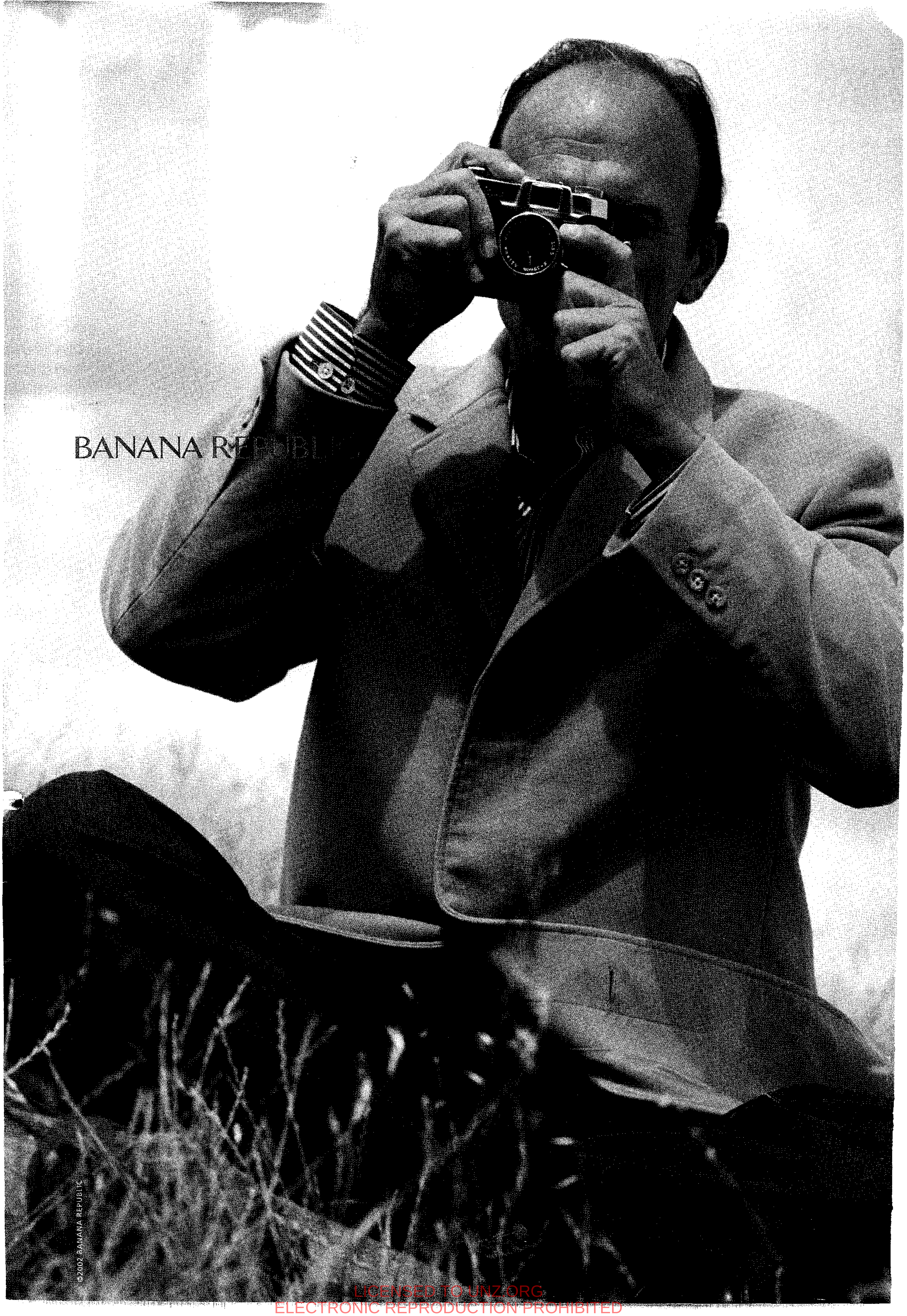
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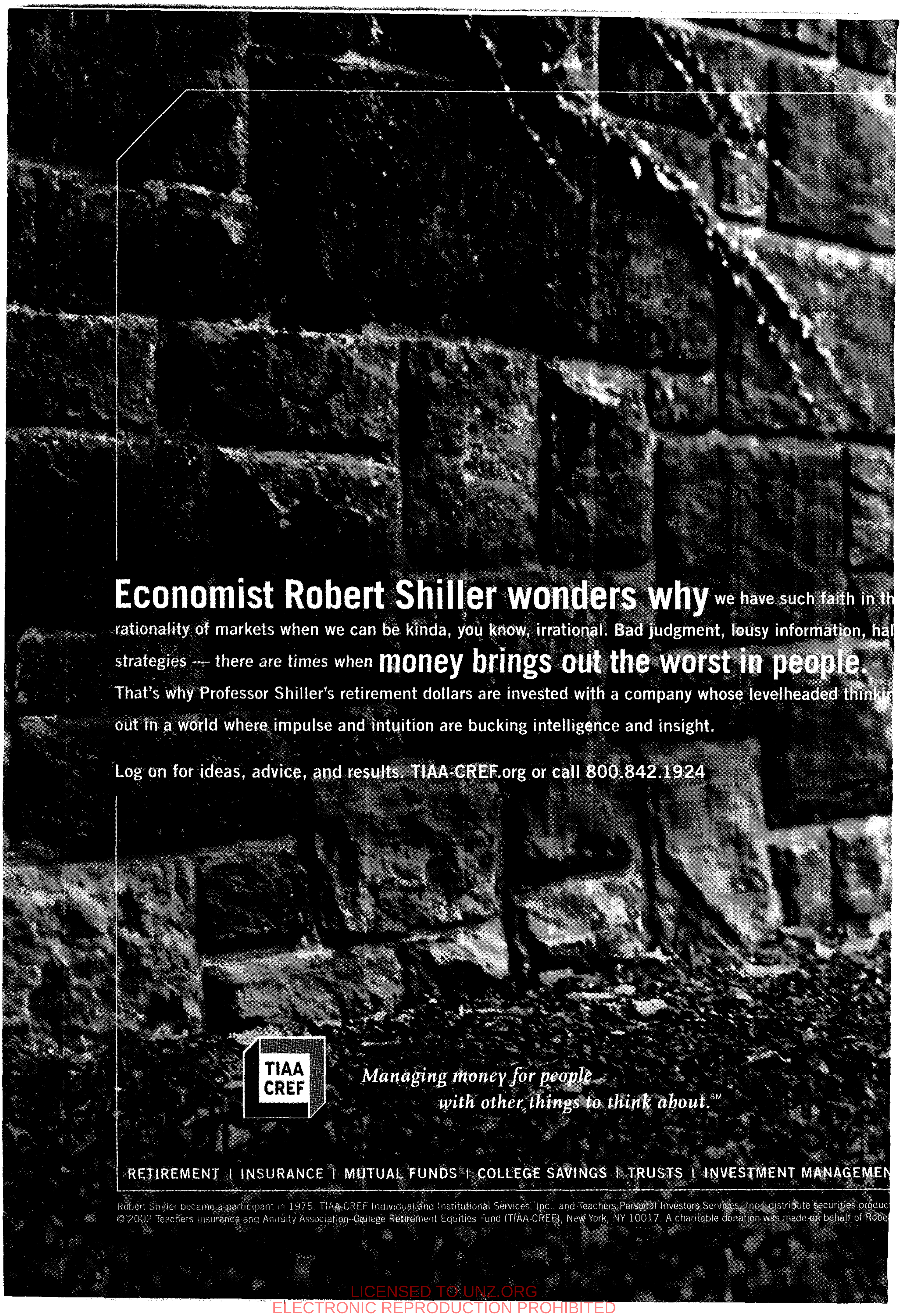

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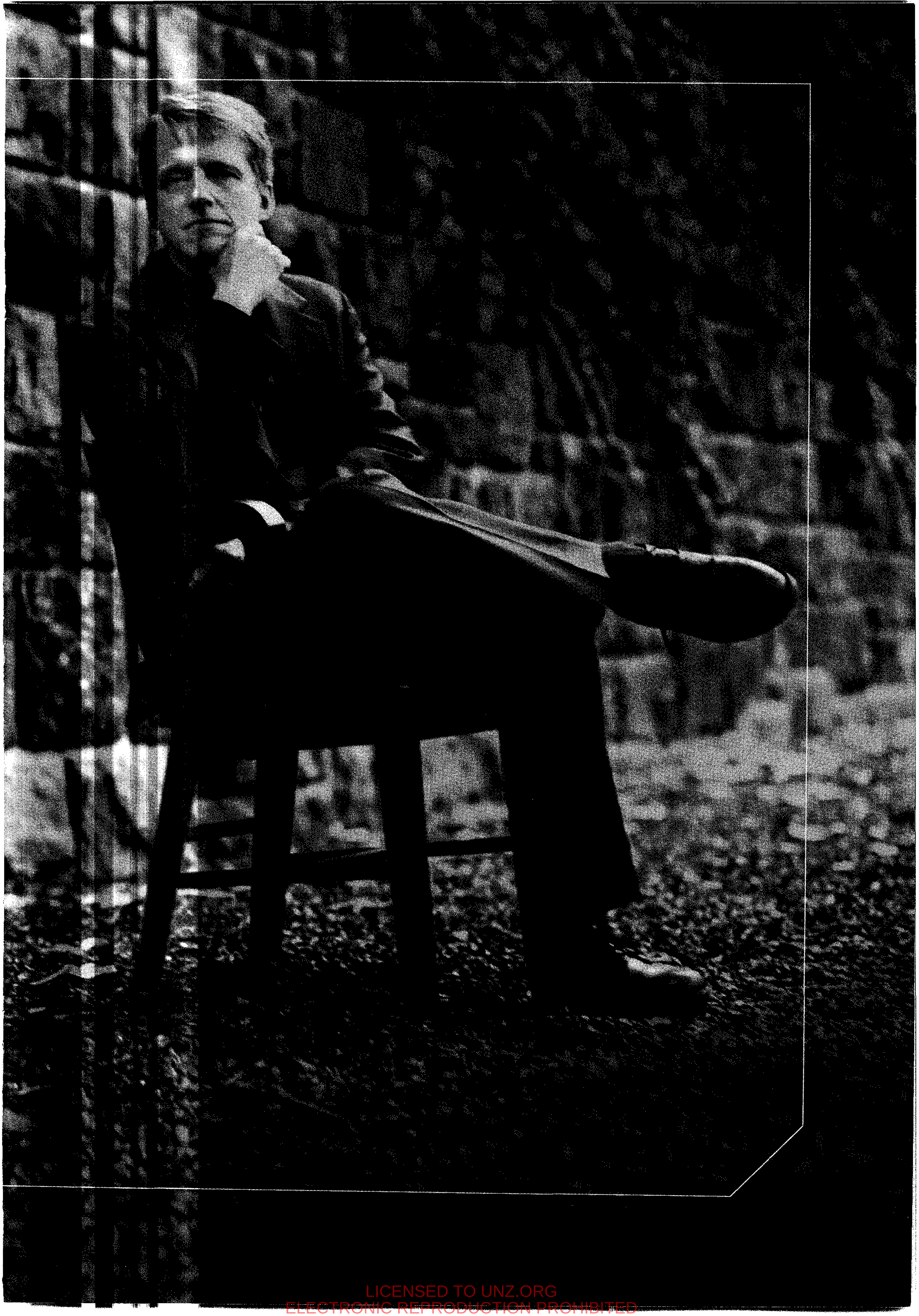

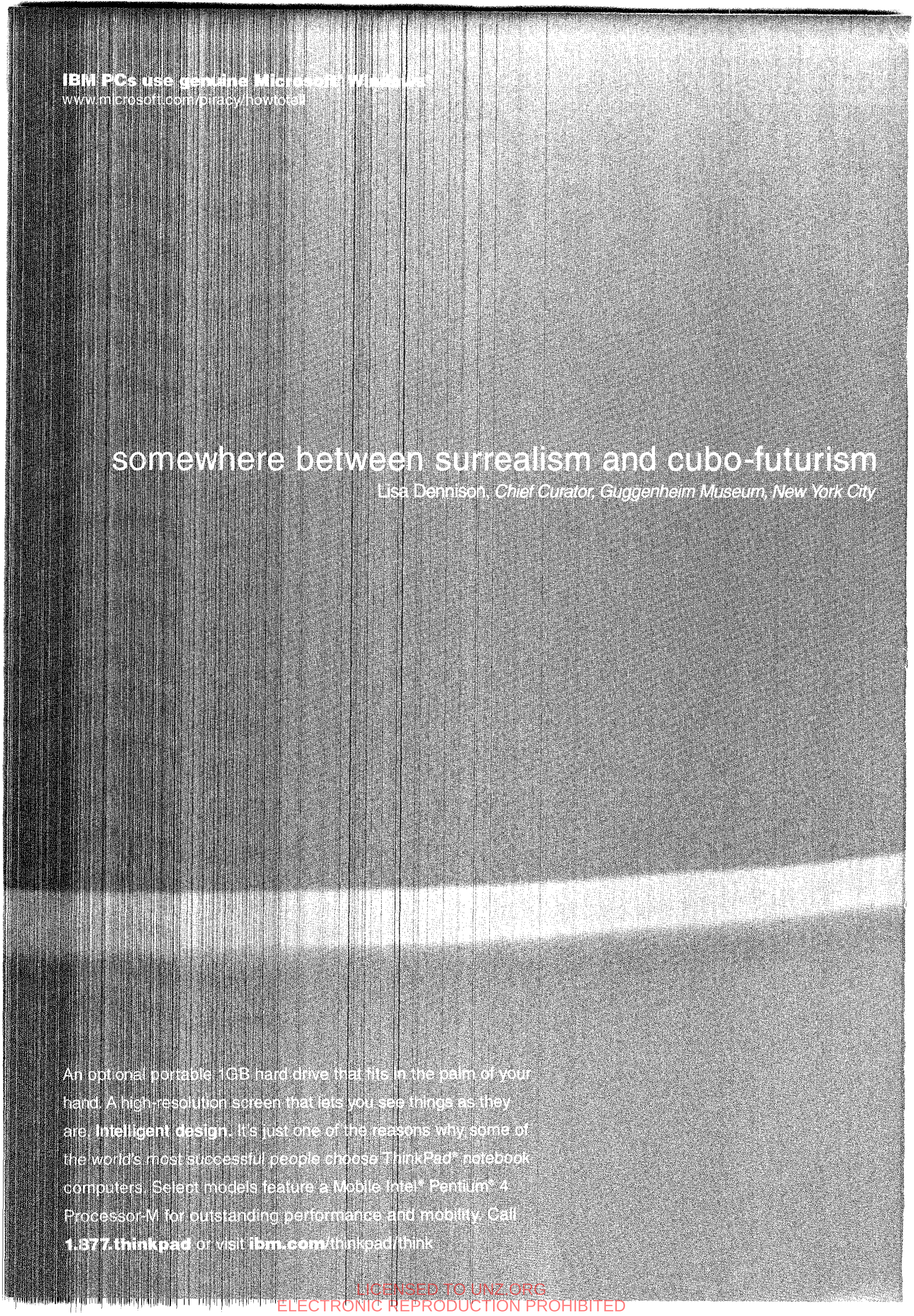

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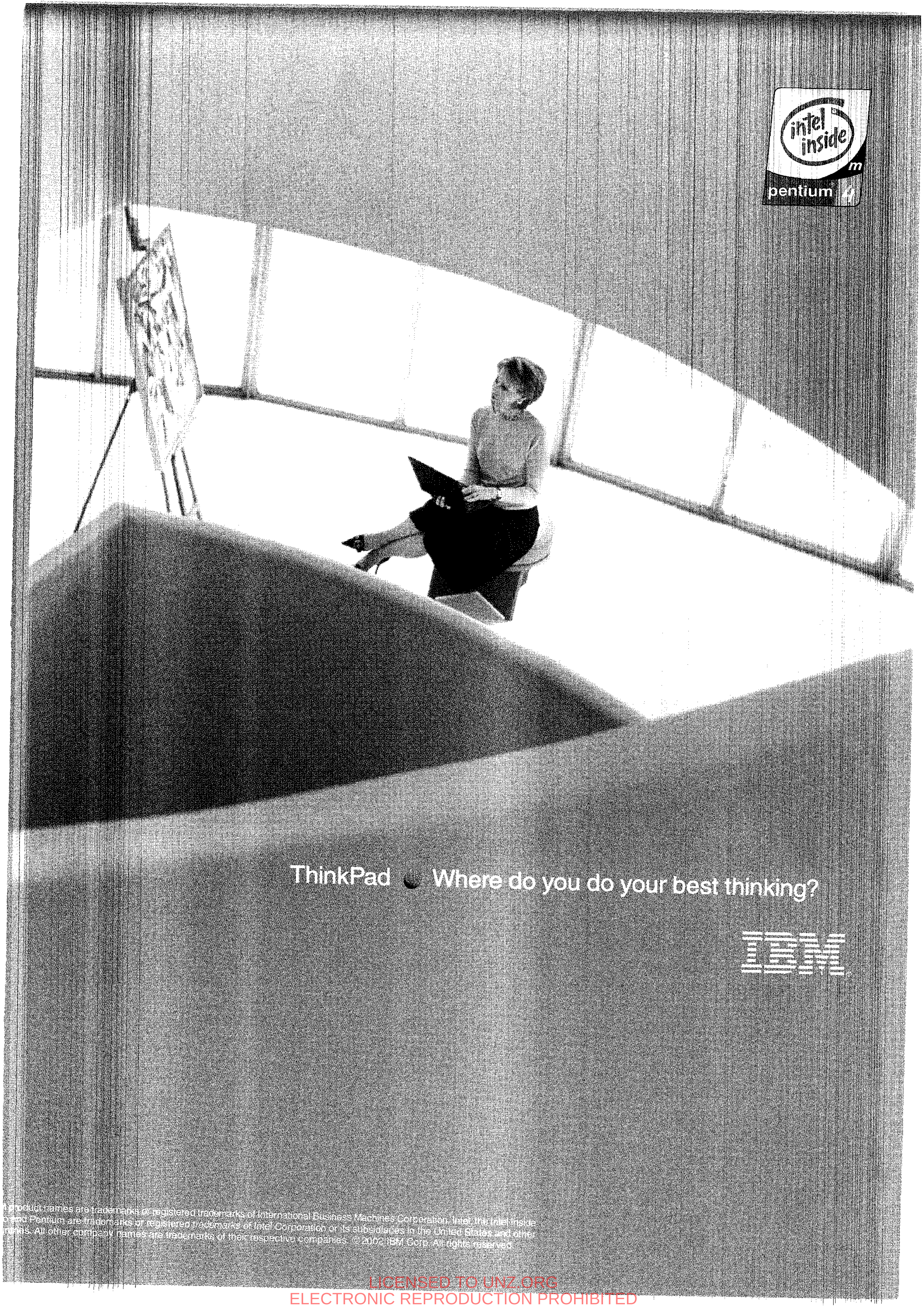
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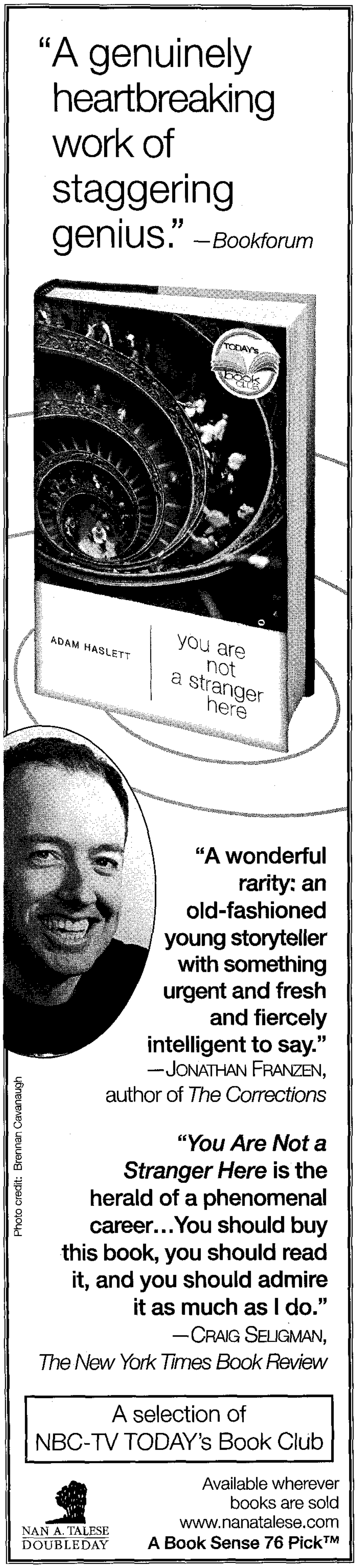
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THE NEW YORKER

SEPTEMBER 2, 2002

10 GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN
31 THE TALK OF THE TOWN
Gay vows; why Bush doesn't know business.

Peter Hessler 40 LETTER FROM CHINA
Beach Summit
Where do China's leaders go for secret talks?
Ellis Weiner 48 SHOUTS & MURMURS
My Goals
Paul Wilkes 50 ANNALS OF RELIGION
The Reformer
A priest takes on the Archbishop of Boston.
Philip Gourevitch 106 A REPORTER AT LARGE
Can You Forgive Him?
An F.B.I. sting and a mayor's corruption trial.
Sharon DeLano 114 AT THE MUSEUMS
Garry Winogrand's photographs.
John Seabrook 120 DEPT. OF MOTOR VEHICLES
The Slow Lane
Why the science of traffic keeps getting stuck.
Gary Shteyngart 130 FICTION
"Shylock on the Neva"

THE CRITICS

David Denby 140 THE THEATRE
"Hairspray."
Cynthia Ozick 143 A CRITIC AT LARGE
Gershom Scholem and the Kabbalah.
149 BOOKS
Briefly Noted
Peter Schjeldahl 150 THE ART WORLD
Jane Freilicher's New York.
Anthony Lane 152 THE CURRENT CINEMA
Jean-Luc Godard's "In Praise of Love."

POEMS

Zbigniew Herbert 54 "The Lyrical Zone"
Dorothea Tanning 116 "Secret"

COVER *"School Daze," by Maira Kalman* THE BACK PAGE *by Tom Tomorrow*
DRAWINGS *Christopher Weyant, Lee Lorenz, P. C. Vey, Alex Gregory, Drew Dernavich, William Haefeli, Jack Ziegler, Leo Cullum, Mick Stevens, William Hamilton, Mike Twohy, Michael Maslin, Bruce Eric Kaplan, David Sipress, Pat Byrnes, Charles Barsotti, Harry Bliss, Roz Chast, Victoria Roberts, Michael Crawford*

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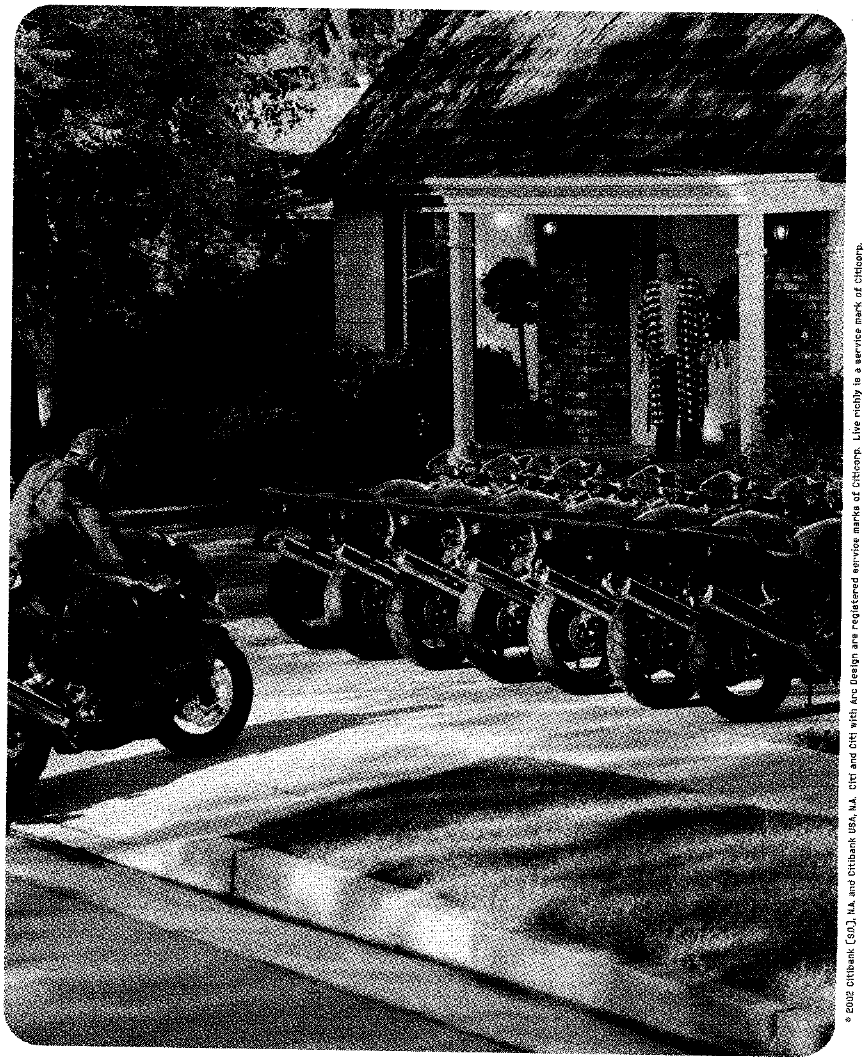

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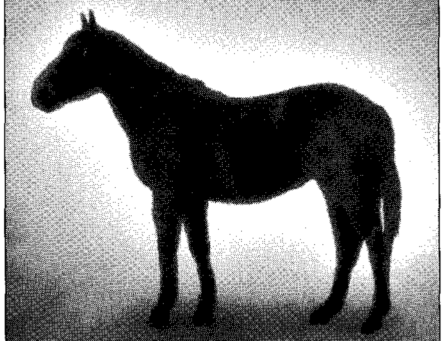
On August 26, Richard Jury's fate is in your hands.

Martha Grimes



The Grave Maurice

Praise for Martha Grimes

"[Grimes'] gift for evoking mood and emotion is as keen as her talent for inventing a demanding puzzle, and solving it."
—The Wall Street Journal

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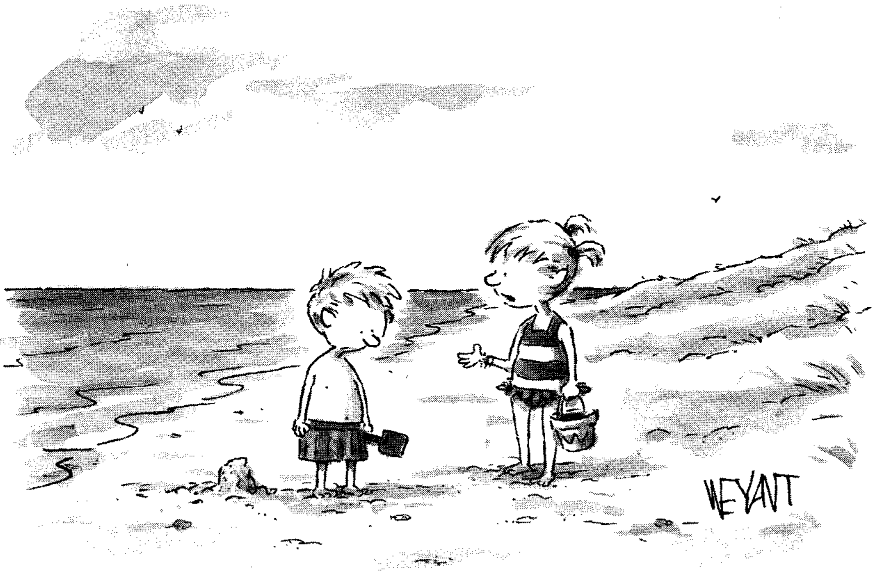
J. Otto Seibold (Illustration, p. 131) has his ninth children's book, "Gluey," with Vivian Walsh, coming out in the fall. ♦



"We swam. We made sand castles. I'm sorry, Michael—I thought you understood that this was just a summer thing."

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THE MAIL

MAYA ANGELOU'S SONG

I was disappointed by Hilton Als's review of Maya Angelou's memoirs (Books, August 5th). Als criticizes Angelou for her "psychological self-involvement," but Angelou is blunt about her immaturity and selfishness as a young woman; she, at least, finds humor in her youthful arrogance. Als, however, not only deprecates her writing but accuses her of the cardinal sin of standing central to her own story: "The people who come into her life function primarily as props in the ongoing drama of Maya Angelou." Would it disturb Als less if she functioned as a prop in someone else's drama? He complains that Angelou lacks the "self-knowledge" that made Billie Holiday a great artist, and that she instead writes "from the vantage point of a woman who has compromised nearly everything." What has she compromised, and since when does self-knowledge predicate talent? That said, Angelou is no Billie Holiday. But she is not, as Als declares, "only moderately talented." Angelou has proved, in her early memoirs, that she is a deeply talented writer. Her later collections can indeed be trite, but Angelou deserves admiration for her better achievements, and far more credit than Als gives her for the very lack of compromise with which she has lived an unusual and vividly rendered life.

Sarah Weiler
Brookline, Mass.

DECEPTIVE FACES

Malcolm Gladwell's article on the "science" of facial expressions was unnerving ("The Naked Face," August 5th). It is easy to make a hero out of a cop who saves himself, a perp, and his partner by his uncanny ability to read faces. But the history of physical profiling in law enforcement, from phrenology to the cataloguing of the physiognomy of "criminal types," is hardly reassuring. Such systems have never been free from misuse or social and racial prejudice. Today, a parallel could be drawn to genetic "markers" that show a disposition—obvious only to the expert—toward criminality. Even if one were to accept the view that facial gestures are "universal products of evolution," their interpretation is undeniably weighted down by culture. Often, making science the mediator of truth is nothing but a convenient means of ignoring our own biases.

Julian Bleecker
New York City

Since all the peoples of the eastern highlands of New Guinea experienced endemic warfare prior to colonial "pacification," the notion conveyed in Gladwell's article that the South Fore were a "peaceful and friendly" people, as opposed to the allegedly bellicose Kukukuku—qualities supposedly evident to the researcher and "face reader" Silvan Tomkins from film clips—is groundless. Indeed, at the time that Carleton Gajdusek filmed that footage, the Fore were experiencing a ravaging epidemic of a variant of spongiform encephalopathy which they attributed to the murderous actions of sorcerers. Kukukuku is, in fact, not the proper name of a tribe at all but a colonial-era nickname, now widely regarded as derogatory, used to refer to the Anga peoples, who live in an especially remote area. The peoples of the eastern highlands—where I conducted eighteen months of anthropological fieldwork—are all alternately "gentle" and "violent," depending on sociopolitical and historical circumstance. Guessing when someone is lying is one thing, but stereotyping the essence of an entire culture based on a few glimpses of film footage is a dubious scientific endeavor at best.

Thomas Strong
San Francisco, Calif.

•

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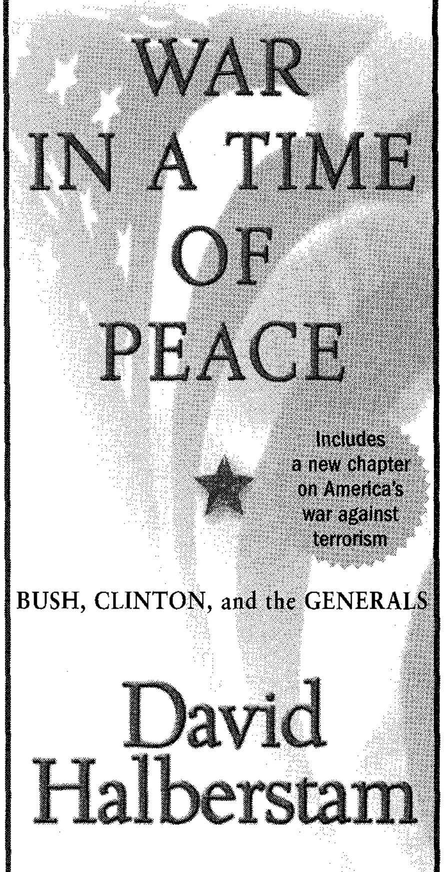
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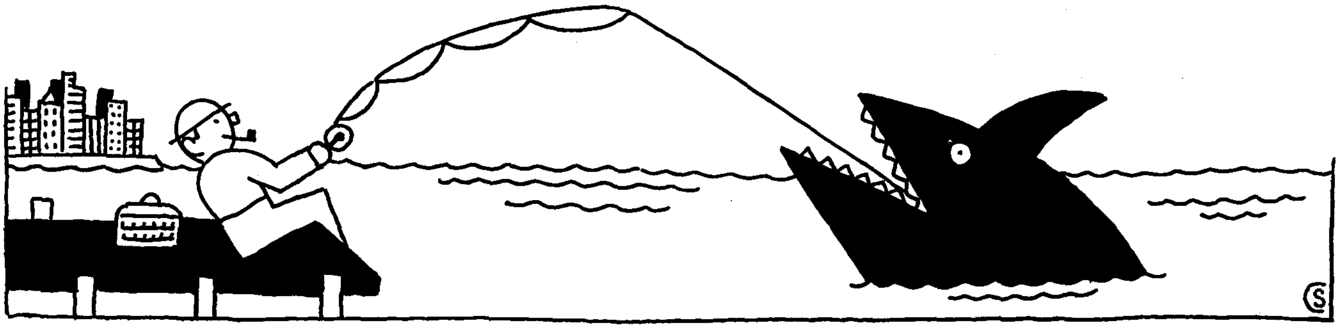

THE THEATRE
OPENINGS & PREVIEWS

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BURN THIS
Catherine Keener and Edward Norton lead the cast in a Signature Theatre Company revival of Lanford Wilson's 1987 drama, about three New Yorkers in the aftermath of a mutual friend's accidental death. James Houghton is the director. In previews. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

JOE
In Richard Maxwell's new play, six actors portray the title character at different stages in his life. Previews begin Aug. 30. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

TAKE ME OUT
From London's Donmar Warehouse, a new play by Richard Greenberg, in which a heroic baseball player comes out to the press. Joe Mantello is the director. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 239-6200.)

OPENED RECENTLY

ALL OVER
Rosemary Harris and Michael Learned lead a well-cast ensemble in the Roundabout Theatre Company's revival of Edward Albee's 1971 play about living with mortality. They portray the bitter wife and loving mistress, respectively, of a dying man of great wealth and social standing, who have come together at his deathbed—along with his dejected son and angry daughter (Patrick Garner and Pamela Nyberg), an old family friend (John Carter), and a very canny old doctor-and-nurse duo (Bill Moor and Myra Carter). Thanks to the fine performances, the sting, humor, and sadness of Albee's view comes through: we're all inherently selfish, so loving the dying is often easier than loving the living. Emily Mann is the director. (Gramercy, 127 E. 23rd St. 307-4100. Closes Sept. 1.)

THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE
This Roundabout Theatre revival of the 1938 Rodgers and Hart comedy based on Shakespeare's "The Comedy of Errors" has a new book by Nicky Silver, based on George Abbot's original script—and something has been lost in translation. Rather than perked up, the show feels freighted by the update. Scott Ellis's direction and the costumes, by Martin Pakledinaz, have Looney Tunes written all over them. The resulting hybrid of humor brings to mind the broad, silly, knowing farce that Carol Burnett's company patented in the seventies, which hasn't aged well, either. Rodgers and Hart's songs are timeless, and the game cast renders them well, but that's still not a good enough reason to sit through everything else. (American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. 719-1300.)

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS
In the Aquila Theatre Company's excellent production of Shakespeare's intricately foolish story, the laughs are many and the delights deep. The producer-director team of Peter Meineck and Robert Richmond start with a reverence for the playwright, then employ just about any theatrical technique that will illuminate his words—among them song, dance, song and dance, dumb show, vaudeville, and burlesque. The seven cast members, led here by Mark Saturno and Louis Butelli as the two sets of twins, mix remarkable range with insane energy. Anthony Cochrane's music wittily underscores some scenes, and it fairly drives others. The setting, the Turkish port city of Ephesus, affords the opportunity for a bright and exotic production design. The costume designer, Sarah Hill, uses the inevitable fezzes and caftans, but in the world of Aquila Edwardian jackets and forties sundresses work perfectly well, too. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 239-6200. The show closes here on Sept. 1. It moves to the Harold Clurman on Sept. 3.)

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS
The Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival's version. (Boscobel Restoration, Garrison, N.Y. 845-265-9575. Closes Sept. 1.)

ENDPAPERS
The first full-length play by Thomas McCormack, the retired C.E.O. of an independently owned publishing house (St. Martin's), about choosing a successor as C.E.O. of an independently owned publishing house. The play is highly literate (imagine: grammar jokes!) and full of zingy one-liners. The characters are not just types but unavoidable types: the crusty chief, the heir apparent, the office lesbian, the well-dressed hatchet, the ambitious blond assistant who is bound for glory. All are well played by an ensemble cast, under the direction of Pamela Berlin. The set, by Neil Patel, is perfect: you may feel as if you'd never left the office. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

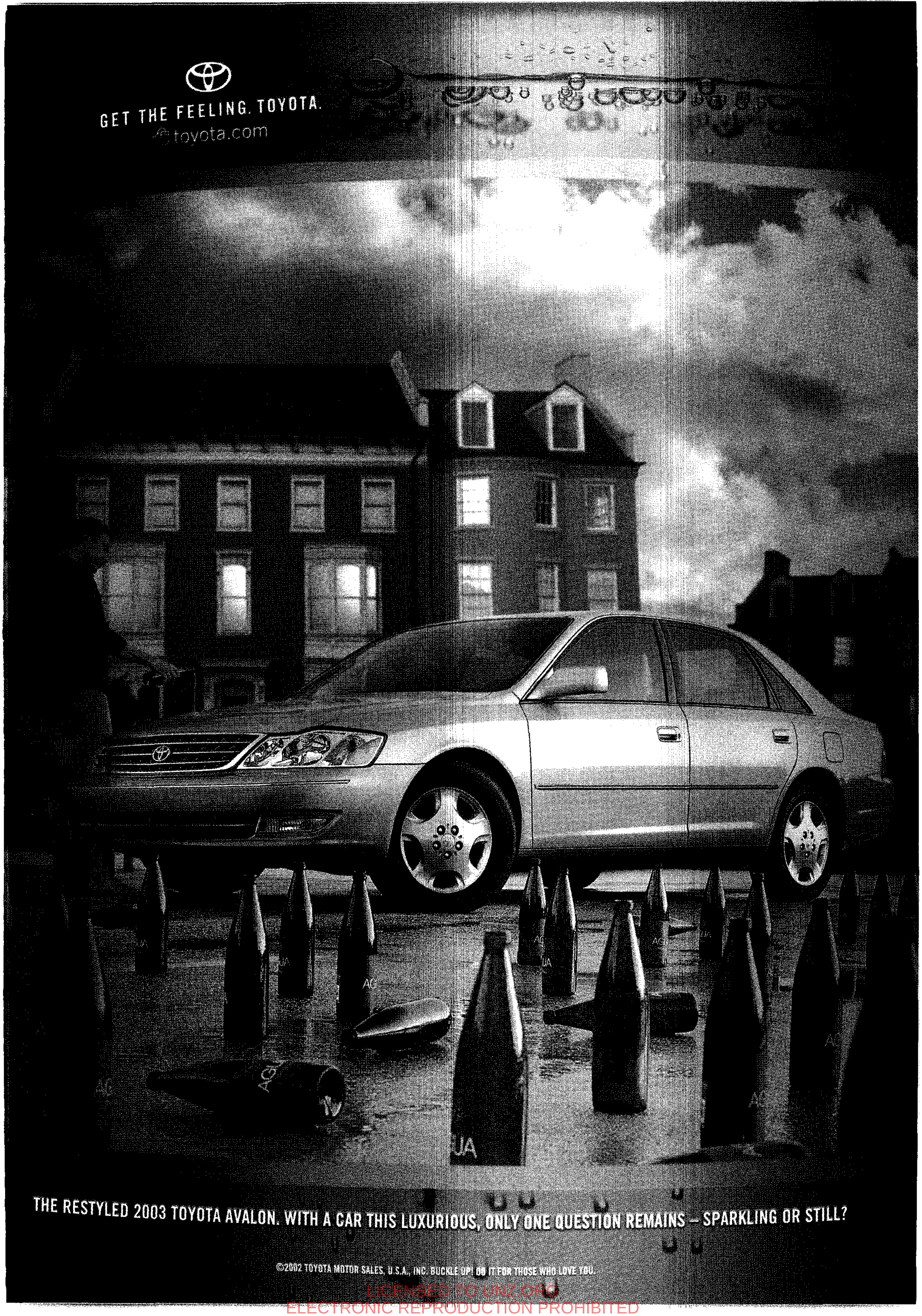
FRANKIE AND JOHNNY IN THE CLAIR DE LUNE
Edie Falco and Stanley Tucci star in Terrence McNally's 1987 play, under the direction of Joe Mantello. (Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

THE GRADUATE
This pointless production, starring Kathleen Turner as Mrs. Robinson, is endless and full of dead air. There are exactly two pleasures here: Victor Slezak, as Mr. Robinson, and Murphy Guyer, as Benjamin's father; they depict beautifully the anger and anxiety that underlie their postwar poolside bonhomie. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/15/02.) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE GUYS
A dialogue between a fire captain who lost eight of his men on September 11th and an editor who helps him prepare their eulogies, written by Anne Nelson, a journalist, and directed by Jim Simpson, the Flea Theatre's artistic director. It's an artful and moving re-creation of the relationships New Yorkers formed as a result of that day—of the way that people "jumped tracks" and suddenly saw into each other's lives—and an admirable tribute to the men who died. (The Flea, 41 White St. 206-1515.)

HAIRSPRAY
A new musical, based on the 1988 John Waters film, with a book by Mark O'Donnell and Thomas Meehan and songs by Marc Shaiman and Scott Wittman. Jack O'Brien is the director. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100.)

HARLEM SONG
Essentially a revue, using both old and new compositions, selected or written by the director George C. Wolfe and the show's talented music supervisors, Zane Mark and Daryl Waters. It has no dialogue to speak of—or, at least, no dialogue that contributes significantly to the plot or helps to convey the time line framing the show's eleven sections, each of which mark a particular moment in the neighborhood's social history ("The Harlem Renaissance," "La Imigración," "The Depression," and so on). Like Alice Walker's "The Color Purple" and the novels of Terry McMillan, it is a form of art whose aesthetic concerns are secondary to its desire to make "the people" feel good, about themselves and their community. The Harlem of "Harlem Song" is not an urban wasteland in the process of reinventing itself. It is a realm of legend and lore, and a mythical homeland, which it is our duty as theatregoers, as citizens, to celebrate. This is a point worth making, but not one that bears much repeating. And since there is little factual detail to support this portrayal, "Harlem Song" degenerates rather swiftly into propaganda. We see the neighborhood's fabu-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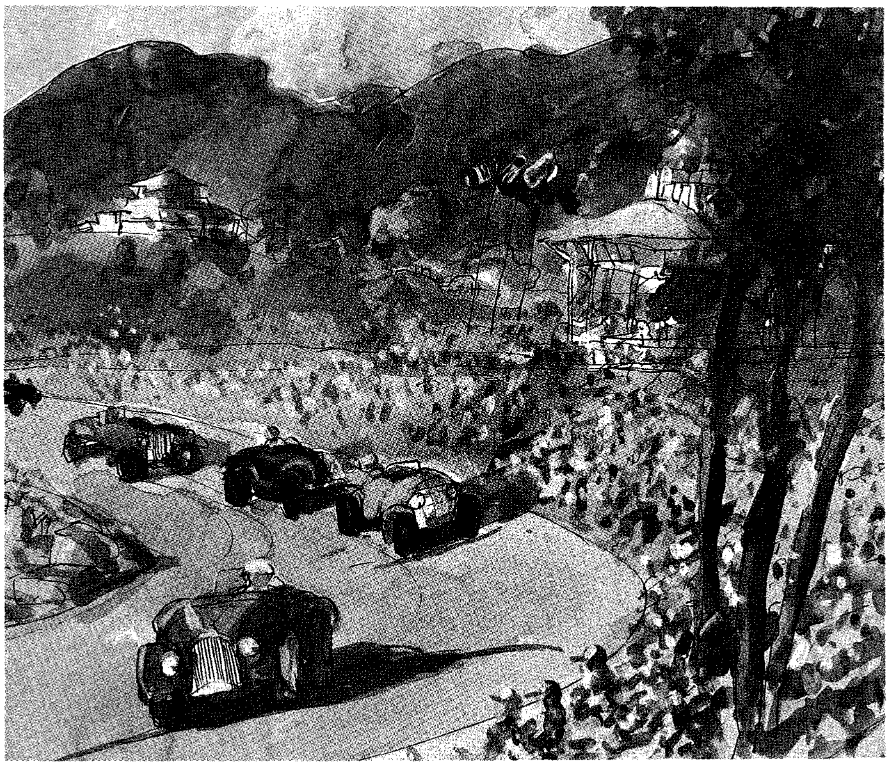
lous past, and we hope for its fabulous future, all without quite knowing how Harlem became Harlem in the first place. (8/19 & 26/02.) (Apollo Theatre, 253 W. 125th St. 307-7171.)

I'M NOT RAPPAPORT
Judd Hirsch is the main attraction in this revival of Herb Gardner's 1985 play, as he revisits the role of an unregenerate Jewish Socialist geezer, who complicates the life of his foil on the park bench, an aging Upper West Side super, nimbly played by Ben Vereen. There's plenty of shtick here—at one point, posing as a lawyer, Hirsch might as well be wearing Groucho glasses—but, under the guidance of Daniel Sullivan, who directed the original Broadway production, the routines of this shuffling duo transcend vaudeville and gather poignancy as they go. Who would have thought that the Central Park of 1982, with its muggers and other dangers, would come so soon to feel like Old New York? (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)



RARE VINTAGES *The mecca for old-car aficionados over Labor Day weekend is Lime Rock Park, in northwestern Connecticut, which is celebrating its twentieth Vintage Festival with a series of shows and races featuring automobiles with names like Allard, Aston Martin, Bugatti, Delahaye, Maserati, Porsche, and Shelby. Each of the races is fifteen laps around a mile-and-a-half track, and the most eye-catching event is the stately competition among prewar classics. "Some of them," Roy Hasty, the festival spokesman, says, "can still get up to ninety to a hundred—if that."*

ROBERT ANDREW PARKER

INTO THE WOODS
Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's 1987 fairy-tale-derived musical isn't so much a rethinking of fairy tales as it is a parable about growing up and finding your place in the community, and about learning to live with uncertainty and ambivalence. The archetypal material is treated with suitable directness and simplicity, and yet the show lacks none of the intelligence or emotional honesty we expect from Sondheim. Mr. Lapine is the director. (5/13/02) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

JOHN MORAN W/EVA MÜLLER
The techno-opera composer and the German dancer and choreographer team up to perform excerpts from Moran's earlier works, which have included "Jack Benny!," "Everyday Newt Burman," and "Mathew in the School of Life." Sundays at 7:30, through Sept. 15. (Galapagos Art Space, 70 N. 6th St., between Kent and Wythe Sts., Brooklyn. 718-384-4586.)

METAMORPHOSES
Ovid's tales, loosely adapted and directed by Mary Zimmerman, who had the ingenious idea of staging the caprice of the gods in a swimming pool. The production is fun and full of wonder, but it illustrates rather than dramatizes psychic struggle. The show's gimmick, the pool, turns out to be its metaphor—refreshing and shallow. (3/18/02) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

OKLAHOMA!
There are stupendous pleasures in the Royal National Theatre's version of Rodgers and Hammerstein's 1943 American classic. Many of them are due to the high-spirited, humorous choreography of Susan Stroman, and to Anthony Ward's picturesque set. But technique, which can make a show work, is not enough to make it wonderful. (4/1/02) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD
J. M. Synge's classic 1907 comedy about a young man lionized by a remote Irish village after he shows up in their midst with a story of having killed his abusive father—and the fallout when the father shows up only slightly bloodied. The show explores issues of reputation, love, lust, and the thrill of scandal in a surprisingly modern way, and in remarkably beautiful language. The Irish Rep cast is strong, especially Aedin Moloney, as a lonely widow. Kirk Bookman's warm lighting makes the most of David Raphael's detailed stone-cottage set. Directed by Charlotte Moore with a sure hand. (132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737. Closes Sept. 8.)

THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER
Mark Twain's novel has been adapted for the stage and musicalized by Neil Berg (score and lyrics) and Bernie Garza and Ray Roderick (book). (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

PRIVATE LIVES
In Noël Coward's comedy of bad manners, two wonderful actors, Alan Rickman and Lindsay Duncan, play the embattled exes Elyot and Amanda—dandies of detachment who jilt their new spouses and run away together to a Parisian love nest. Howard Davies's radical notion is to play Elyot and Amanda's physical passion for real. This allows him to capitalize on the wonderful chemistry between Rickman and Duncan, but it also throws the comedy weirdly off kilter. (5/6/02) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100. Closes Sept. 1.)

RICKY JAY: ON THE STEM
The master magician's tribute to the flimflammery and weird entertainments that have cropped up over the years along the length of Broadway, "the stem that winds the watch" of New York City. Prepare to be happily hornswoggled. Directed by David Mamet. (Second Stage, 307 W. 43rd St. 246-4422.)

SICK WITH LUST: FIRE ISLAND TALES BY ANDREW HOLLERAN
An adaptation of two stories by the author of "Dancer from the Dance," conceived and directed by Randy Gener. Thursdays and Saturdays at 10, through Aug. 31. (Judy's Chelsea, 169 Eighth Ave., at 18th St. 462-9077.)

THOROUGHLY MODERN MILLIE
Just like the 1967 movie it's based on, this musical is supposed to be all madcap Jazz Age fizziness, but the harder the cast sings and dances, the flatter the enterprise falls. The colors seem garish rather than gay, the manic energy feels forced at gunpoint, and the only thing you recall about Sutton Foster's Millie after you leave the theatre is her huge white teeth and bouncy black bob. Call it thoroughly boring, shrilly. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

21 DOG YEARS: DOING TIME@AMAZON.COM
Michael Daisey spent three years at Amazon during its headiest, do-no-wrong period. And now he's telling all. He's a charismatic performer, and up until the end, when he becomes a bit self-righteous, his show has the insightful hostility of the best comedy. The audience doesn't learn anything new about the dot-com bubble and its discontents, but it's fun to get the view from the inside. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 239-6200. Closes Sept. 2.)

LONG RUNS

AIDA
Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4747.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4747.

BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES
Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370.

CABARET
Studio 54, at 254 W. 54th St. 239-6200.

CHICAGO
Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (ABRIDGED)
Century Center, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200.

CONTACT
Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. (Closes Sept. 1.)

DE LA GUARDA
Daryl Roth, 20 Union Sq. E., at 15th St. 239-6200.

FORBIDDEN BROADWAY: 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.

42ND STREET
Ford Center, 213 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.

THE FULL MONTY
Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200. (Closes Sept. 1.)

THE GOAT; OR, WHO IS SYLVIA
Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.

I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE
Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.

THE LION KING
New Amsterdam, 214 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.

LOVE, JANIS
Village Theatre, 158 Bleecker St. 307-4100.

LES MISÉRABLES
Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.
MAMMA MIA!
Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 563-5544.
NOISES OFF
Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 307-4100.
PERFECT CRIME
Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401.
THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.
THE PRODUCERS
St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.
PROOF
Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.
PUPPETRY OF THE PENIS
John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.
RENT
Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000.
STOMP
Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.
THE TALE OF THE ALLERGIST'S WIFE
Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. (Closes Sept. 15.)
TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING
St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 239-6200.
UNDERNEATH THE LINTEL
Soho Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 239-6200.
URINETOWN
Henry Miller, 124 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.
THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES
Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.

DANCE

MERCE CUNNINGHAM DANCE COMPANY
Cunningham's firm belief that a dance can exist "unprompted by references other than to its own life" has always irked a part of his audience—the part that inevitably sees any dance with couples in it, for example, as a love story. The current "Event" (a Cunningham "Event" is a collage of excerpts from repertory, designed for a particular site and moment) offers a relaxation in that long-time policy: it will take place just blocks from the hole where the World Trade Center stood and just days from the anniversary of its destruction. According to the choreographer, the dance, as well as the music (composed and performed by the company's musical director Takehisa Kosugi and the Dadaist d.j. Christian Marclay), will make—for this occasion—significant reference to something "other than its own life." (Evening Stars Music and Dance Series, Battery Park, at State St. and Battery Pl. 219-9401, ext. 300. Sept. 1 at 7.)

DOWNTOWN DANCE FESTIVAL
The free midday dance series. Aug. 28 at 12:15: Tokonou All-Ability African Dance, founded by Sidiki Condé. ♦ Aug. 29 at 12:15: Chen and Dancers, under the direction of Hsueh-Tung Chen. ♦ Aug. 30 at 12:15: Chinese Folk Dance Company. (Chase Plaza, Nassau St. at Maiden Lane. For information, call 219-3910.)

NIGHT LIFE
CONCERTS

AEROSMITH
Boston's ageless rockers gallop into the new millennium with the release of their umpteenth collection of libidinous hits, "Oh, Yeah!" Along for the ride are the revered hip-hop old-schoolers **Run-D.M.C.**, whose 1986 revamping of Aerosmith's "Walk this Way" anticipated the dawn of the rap-rock era and the rise of the other act on this bill, **Kid Rock.** (Jones Beach Theatre. 307-7171. Aug. 28 and Aug. 30 at 7.)

DIRTY VEGAS
Thanks to an eye-catching television commercial for the Mitsubishi Eclipse (featuring a spinning car and a passenger-side break-dancer), Dirty Vegas's signature single, "Days Go By," a surprisingly emotive and infectious slice of trancy electronica, became the soundtrack of the summer. Whether the British trio has any other tricks up its sleeve remains to be seen. (The World, Broadway at 43rd St. 307-7171. Aug. 28 at 8.)

THE WHO
Following the recent and sudden death of its original bass player, John Entwistle, the remainder of the Who honors its commitment to yet another outing, which some cynical fans have dubbed the "Who's Left?" tour. Fellow classic-rock veteran **Robert Plant,** who has mellowed considerably since his Led Zeppelin days and recently released a moody set of covers entitled "Dreamland," opens the proceedings. (Jones Beach Theatre. Aug. 31 at 7:30.)

CLUBS

Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.

BAR BELOW
209 Smith St., at Baltic St. (718-694-2277)—Tucked away beneath an Asian restaurant, this subterranean nightspot has an inviting, if somewhat split, personality. You enter into a curvy tile-covered space that feels like a cross between a high-end steam room and a chic Los Angeles hotel bar. The back room is bigger, but here's where Bar Below's other side shows up. Gauzy white fabric covers the walls and the furnishings are fun plastic inflatables. The music is a chest-massaging deep house and the crowd is suitably young and attractive, ideal for the tiled room and those blow-up chairs. But don't think about breaking out the corporate AmEx: unexpectedly, Bar Below is a cash-only joint.

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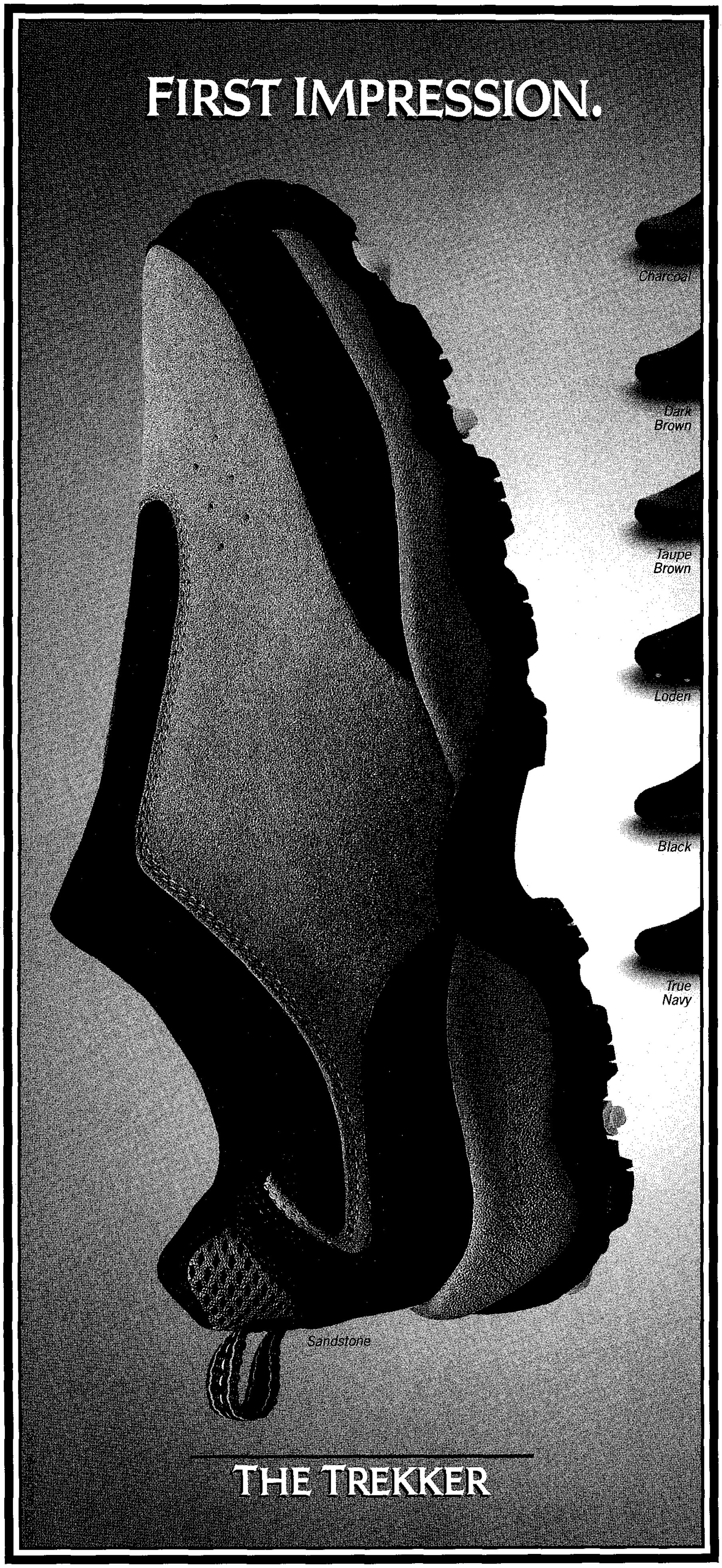


B. B. KING BLUES CLUB & GRILL
237 W. 42nd St. (997-4144)—Sept. 3-4: The incendiary bluesman **Buddy Guy** turned sixty-six this year, but don't worry about his retiring. His live shows are fierce rebellions against the passage of time. With **T-Model Ford,** one of the last surviving Mississippi bluesmen.

BOTTOM LINE
15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Aug. 28: **Chris Hillman** and **Herb Pedersen,** who turned out a few hits together as cornerstones of the late-eighties country-rock outfit the Desert Rose Band, travel far and wide in their recent work together. Their new album, "Way Out West," visits Cajun country, roadside honky-tonks, and bluegrass territory. This comes as no surprise, given that Hillman (a founder of the Byrds and the Flying Burrito Brothers) and Pedersen (who's played banjo with Jerry Garcia and David Grisman) are the very roots of the roots-rock movement. Aug. 31: The flat-picking guitar legend **Doc Watson.**

BOWERY BALLROOM
6 Delancey St. (533-2111)—Aug. 28: As the driving force behind the legendary American alternative band the Replacements, **Paul Westerberg** evolved from a slovenly hooligan into a reluctant balladeer. He spent the past decade struggling with a solo career, but he's back with a pair of albums: "Stereo" and "Mono," the latter of which was released under the pseudonym Grandpaboy and has a sound and style that recall his punkier past. Sept. 3: The Anglophilic locals in **Interpol** hearken back to the bygone eighties, minus an annoying retro-kitsch vibe. The boys evoke that era's post-punk godhead, Joy Division, in their stark tone and sharp-dressed sombreness. Though not the only troupe of backward-looking New Yorkers (given the Strokes' appropriation of the grubby CBGBs chic, the Yeah Yeah Yeahs' "No Wave" bluntness and the Rapture's affection for angular Gang of Fourisms), Interpol conjure an affected gloom without sounding dated.

IRVING PLAZA
17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—Sept. 3: The German-producer collective **Jazzanova,** which first came together behind the d.j. console at Berlin's Delicious Doughnuts club back in the mid-nineties, stakes its underground credibility on avoiding acid-jazz's cheesy clichés. It fuses hip-hop, Afro-funk, drum and bass, Brazilian, Latin, and soul rhythms into a shifting form that's always at home in the dark—be it on the dance floor or in the bedroom.

JOE'S PUB
425 Lafayette St. (539-8777)—Aug. 31: Donald (Tabby) Shaw, Fitzroy (Bunny) Simpson, and Lloyd (Judge) Ferguson have harmonized together through good times and bad as the **Mighty Diamonds,** one of Jamaica's longest-running vocal reggae groups. Backed by the smooth rhythms of the Danger Band, the trio, with their thirty-plus years of experience together, guarantee a quick trip straight to Kingston.

MERCURY LOUNGE
217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—Aug. 29: The **Mendoza Line** is a literate sextet from Brooklyn by way of Athens, Georgia, which turns out sweet country-esque music.

NORTHSIX
66 N. 6th St., Williamsburg (718-599-5103)—Aug. 30: The sonic assault of the Brooklyn noise-rockers in **Black Dice.**

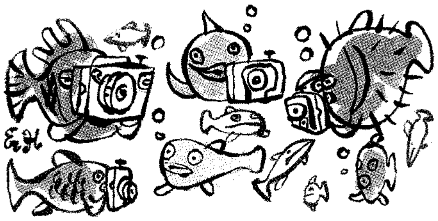
S.O.B.'S
204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—Sept. 3: The Brazilian trio **Zuco 103.** Dining.

SOUTHPAW
125 Fifth Ave., Park Slope. (718-230-0236)—Aug. 28: The all-girl trio **Rasputina** may have seemed like a novelty act when they hit the scene in 1996. But they've stayed true to their corset-wearing, cello-sawing roots, and three atmospheric albums later they've become a cult sensation. None other than the goth impresario Marilyn Manson is a fan and collaborator. Now released from major-label shackles, Rasputina is free to grow in its own strange way. With **Eszter Balint,** a Budapest-born chanteuse and violinist known to many as the deliciously sexy Hungarian cousin in Jim Jarmusch's "Stranger Than Paradise."

BOOK CURRENTS

The Deep

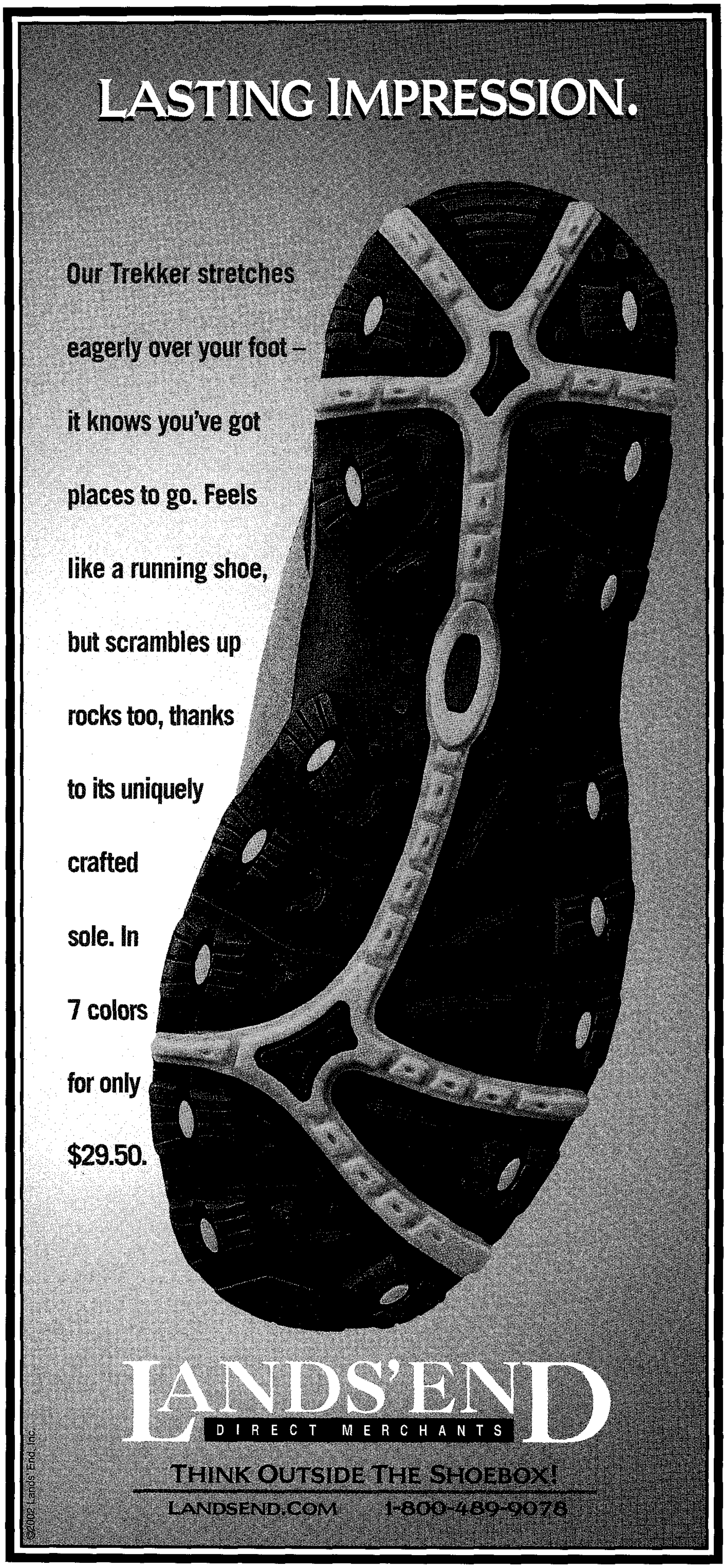
In the forthcoming photographic anthology **OCEANS** (Rizzoli), edited by Sue Hostetler, actor and environmentalist Robert Redford writes about the sea as "a complex natural wilderness" and Jean-Michel Cousteau (son of Jacques) describes the Earth's oceans as "the big story in this solar system." But more than words or advocacy, the big story in "Oceans" is photography's ongoing, and wonderfully quixotic, attempts to fix the sea in its lens. Amid the crashing foam, delicate horizon lines, and international cast of beachcombers depicted here, unforgettable images emerge: Lynn Davis's Greenland icebergs, rising out of the desolate North Atlantic like a giant marble statuary; Rineke Dijkstra's seaside portrait of an iconically awkward teenager; Jock Sturges's luminous study of three nudes on an immense, mirrorlike French beach; and Hiroshi Sugimoto's enigmatic Aegean seascape, in which a feathery crosshatch of waves dissolves into unknowable mist.



If "Oceans" is something of a greatest-hits collection, Philip Plisson's **THE SEA** (forthcoming from Abrams) is an extended tone poem. This brimming monograph includes four hundred of the French marine photographer's evocative color images of churning seas and storm-battered islands. While most photographers concern themselves with the sea's hypnotic surface, the American underwater photographer David Doubilet dives right in. In **GREAT BARRIER REEF** (National Geographic), a study of the Australian wonder first discovered by Captain Cook, Doubilet's camera truly reveals another world of Dr. Seussian spine-cheek clown fish, manta rays on the wing, and kaleidoscopic coral in mid-spawn—an event that Doubilet celebrates as "the most spectacular sex act on the planet."

—*Mark Rozzo*

ERIC HANSON



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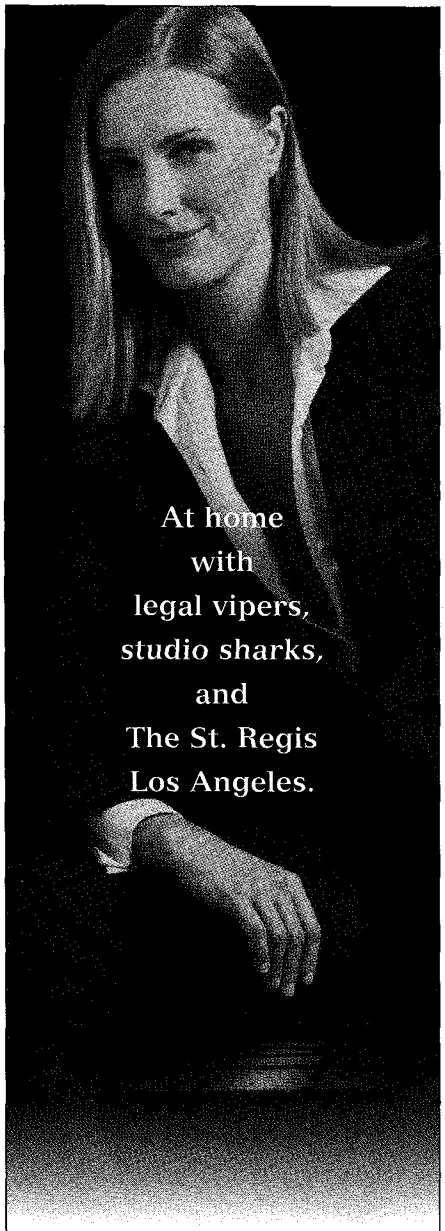

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JAZZ AND STANDARDS

BIRDLAND
315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—Aug. 28: Her longtime gig at Bemelmans Bar now a pleasant memory, **Barbara Carroll** has moved on to a new haunt. Her authentic bebop piano (when she was young, Carroll drew attention on Fifty-second Street, where the likes of Charlie Parker would sit in with her), subtle vocalizing, and encyclopedic knowledge of standards make for a civilizing night out. Aug. 29-31: One of the secret heroes of modern jazz, the trumpeter, composer, bandleader, and Canadian mainstay **Kenny Wheeler** has been able to successfully translate his lyrical impulses onto the epic scale of the big band. His music for Large Ensemble finds room for lush arrangements as well as spots for gifted improvisers, including the leader himself. Dining.

BLUE NOTE
131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Through Sept. 1: An evening of old-school entertainment guaranteed to satisfy. With the death last year of his longtime partner, the singer Etta Jones, the tenor saxophonist **Houston Person** is on his own again. His room-engulfing tone is a thrill in itself, particularly when he wraps it around a ballad like a comforting scarf. / A Los Angeles legend, the vocalist **Ernie Andrews** brings decades of experience and his stirring baritone to the stage.

IRIDIUM
1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (582-2121)—Through Sept. 1: **Hammiet Bluiett's** Baritone Nation. A gang of first-rate players, including **James Carter** and the Master himself, celebrate the joys of the low end in this unique baritone-heavy unit. Mondays belong to the electric-guitar innovator **Les Paul.**

JAZZ GALLERY
290 Hudson St., near Spring St. (242-1063)—Aug. 28-29: **Avishai Cohen** and the **International Vamp Band.** Cohen, to judge from his work with Chick Corea's Origin band or his trio, may be the most exciting new bassist since Christian McBride. With his own ensembles, Cohen—an Israeli—goes multicultural, mixing international rhythms and textures with urban jazz. Aug. 30-31: The **Jason Moran** trio. Moran's forthcoming solo release, "Modernistic," finds him retooling work by everyone from James P. Johnson to Afrika Bambatta, but the brilliant young pianist truly comes alive when interacting with the volatile rhythm team of the bassist **Tarus Mateen** and the drummer **Nasheet Waits.**

SMOKE
2751 Broadway, between 105th and 106th Sts. (864-6662)—Aug. 30-31: The **Al Foster** quartet. Foster, a much valued drummer, has brought rhythmic sparkle to the bands of Miles Davis, Sonny Rollins, and Joe Henderson, among many others. For his own turn to shine, he's enlisted **Chris Potter,** an acclaimed saxophonist whose own widespread experience includes high-profile work with Dave Holland and Steely Dan.

VILLAGE VANGUARD
178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through Sept. 1: The peripatetic clarinettist **Don Byron** brings in his feisty sextet. With the formidable percussionist **Milton Cardona** generating cross-rhythms, the band wears its Latin bent on its sleeve. The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

ART
MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—Much of Denmark's famous Ordrupgaard Collection is summering in Manhattan while the collection's permanent home outside Copenhagen undergoes renovations. Assembled almost a century ago by the insurance magnate Wilhelm Hansen (1868-1936), the selection has a sensible French bias. Highlights include Ingres's portrait of Dante and a snarling Delacroix lion (both originally owned by Degas), along with a host of heartthrob pictures by the likes of Corot, Monet, Sisley, Renoir, and Gauguin. Equally impressive are the Danish rooms, which showcase realists like Skovgaard, Eckersberg, Christian Kobke, and the eerily great Wilhelm Hammershoi. Hammershoi—a missing link between Vermeer, Hopper, and Wyeth—creates empty, mauve-gray interiors with a signature northern ghostliness. Through Sept. 8. ♦ **"Gauguin in New York Collections: The Lure of the Exotic"** crowds the downstairs of the Robert Lehman wing with a few familiar masterpieces—the Met's "Ia Orana Maria (Hail Mary)," the Albright-Knox's "Manao Tupapau (Spirit of the Dead Watching)"—and many lesser paintings, drawings, sculptures, prints, documents, and oddities (portrait ceramic vessels, a carved walking stick representing a serpent and a wooden shoe). Saluting the Empire State's ravenous hunger for Gauguin, the unchoosy mélange affords a pungent

CLASSICAL NOTES

A NEW CROP OF OPERAS
The first major adaptation of Margaret Atwood's sci-fi feminist fable **"The Handmaid's Tale"** was a disappointment: a sluggish, preachy film. But now Poul Ruders, Denmark's most provocative composer, has turned the novel into a terrifying nightmare of an opera, and the Dacapo label has released a live recording taken from the 2000 première performances at the Royal Danish Theatre. Atwood's story was scary enough to begin with: Christian fundamentalists, appalled at the moral degradation of the United States, murder the President and the members of Congress and establish the Republic of Gilead, which they rule by brutal force. The handmaids, morally compromised women from "the time before," are enslaved as concubines to the Republic's middle-aged wise men. Atwood's vision had a slicing satire; lost in the film, it returns full force in Ruders's opera. The score requires devoted listening; its dark and wildly eclectic post-minimalism makes the most turbulent works of John Adams seem mild by comparison. Marianne Rørholm handles the atonal arioso of the lead handmaid, Offred, with aplomb, while the legendary basso Aage Haugland, in one of his final recordings, invests the role of the Commander with total authority.

In the nineteen-eighties Oliver Knussen, a more benign creative force, made a magical pair of children's operas with Maurice Sendak, **"Higglety Pigglety Pop!"** and **"Where the Wild Things Are."** They've delighted many an audience since, and now Knussen has conducted a definitive recording of them, released on Deutsche Grammophon. These are gentle, surprising works rooted in the aesthetic of the Diaghilev operas and ballets, and they bring color and verve to Sendak's tales of innocence lost and experience gained.

"Into the Woods," Stephen Sondheim's 1987 fairy-tale musical, also addresses the dangers of getting what you think you want out of life. But while its style may seem simpler than Knussen's dazzling classical virtuosity, it is no less sophisticated—and it's quite a bit more fun. (Sondheim, Knussen, and Ruders all have a common ancestor in Stravinsky, whose constantly changing style gave composers a lot to steal from.) So what if it's not really an opera? The first twelve minutes, a continuous stretch that introduces all the characters and their conflicting desires (and includes a rap song for the Witch, the divine Vanessa Williams), is an ebullient marriage of music and words, and Nonesuch's new recording of this year's Broadway revival is irresistible.

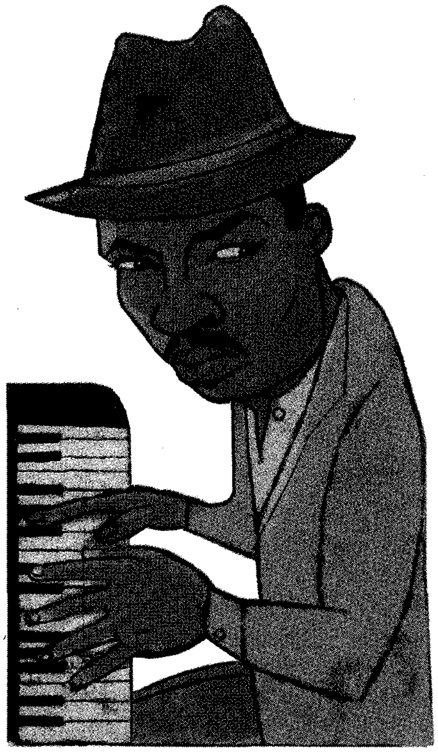
—Russell Platt

sense of the artist's uneven, seductive mojo. Through Oct. 20. ♦ A magnificent retrospective of the works of Thomas Eakins (1844-1916), perhaps the greatest American artist before Abstract Expressionism, endorses the opinion of the artist's older friend and hero Walt Whitman: "Eakins is not a painter, he is a force." Cannily intermingled paintings, photographs, drawings, sculptures, and miscellaneous artifacts—such as grisly casts taken from parts of dissected cadavers—reveal the artist as a yeoman genius, strenuous in all things. Eakins made aesthetics sweat. It is astonishing how contemporary he feels today. Through Sept. 15. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART (MOMA QNS)
33rd St. at Queens Blvd., Long Island City. (708-9480)—The museum's new home, until 2005, opens with a slew of shows perfect for the big, blue renovated factory building near the Fifty-ninth Street Bridge, including the ongoing **"To Be Looked At: Painting and Sculpture from the Collection,"** and **"AUTObodies: Speed, Sport, Transport,"** the museum's car collection. (Open Thursdays through Mondays, 10 to 5, and Friday evenings until 7:45.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—At the top of the museum, seven recent paintings by Jeff Koons are on display, all commissioned by the museum's Berlin branch. These cheery neo-Pop effusions sample visual riffs from advertising: braids, lips, doughnuts, spilling juice, and most appealing, a scattering of giant bright-yellow corn kernels that soars above a verdant Photo-Realist landscape. The title of the series, **"Easyfun-Ethereal,"** broadcasts exactly Koons's note of sardonic consumerism. His technique comes from James Rosenquist; in spirit, though, Koons remains a sort of middlebrow Warhol. Through Sept. 3. ♦ **"Moving Pictures."** When artists post production credits at the entrance to photography exhibitions (Gregory Crewdsen) or première their latest work at the Ziegfeld (Matthew Barney), it's clear that contemporary art has fallen under the spell of cinema. The Guggenheim tracks the seduction from the late sixties to the present in a rigorous and entertaining show of photography, film, and video from its permanent collection. The show opens whimsically in the lobby, with Nam June Paik's "TV Garden," dozens of monitors of varying sizes peeking out from a jungle of potted plants. It continues up the ramp chronologically, from early conceptual work by Acconci, Mendieta, and Nauman to a mini-multiplex: five small theatres screening works by young artists from Pierre Huyghe to Shirin Neshat. Through Jan. 12. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 9 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 9 to 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART
Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—This mid-career retrospective of the work of Michal Rovner, an Israeli-born New York artist, opens with a mesmerizing black-and-white video; row upon row of moving figures cross paths silently in silhouette. (The image suggests an animated musical score with pedestrians in place of notes.) Rovner's work straddles photography, video, and digital art, riffing on minimalism with serial imagery of abstracted subjects. Through the artist's manipulations, bathers in the Dead Sea become ghostly bodies in suspended states and flocks of birds transmogrify into foreboding constellations. There's a self-conscious gravitas to this stuff: despite arresting individual works, the over-all effect is aggravating. The work suffers from the kind of monotony that is often confused with momentousness. Through Oct. 13. ♦ Joan Mitchell, the long-underrated second-generation Abstract Expressionist who died in 1992 at her home near Monet's Giverny, spoke paint. A sumptuous retrospective confirms her as a major artist. Mitchell's varieties of abstract landscape conjure nature (including the difficult human kind, in ornery and exacerbated moods) out of pigmented stuff with authoritative abandon. Lessons from Pollock, de Kooning, and, yes, Monet are apparent but thoroughly subsumed. As with great Monets, you sometimes can't tell what you are looking at. It's paint, sure, but as a medium of metaphysical mystery. Through Sept. 29. ♦ **"Visions from America: Photographs from the Whitney Museum of American Art, 1940-2001."** Through Sept. 22. ♦ This cheerfully low-key survey of seventies-era short films by the Canadian Jack Goldstein celebrates his campy structuralism. The artist, a staple of the eighties gallery scene, was a central figure in the establishment of postmodern appropriation tactics. We see trademarks like the M-G-M lion, along with deadpan portraits of such everyday objects as a knife, a chair, and a glass of milk, popping up in works that run from nineteen seconds to twenty minutes. The exhibition is arranged in three sections, with two screens looping three programs of films, while the other one continuously projects "The Jump" (1978), whose squiggly-lined animations catch a high-diver in hypnotic, predigital yet pixellated repetition. Through Sept. 22. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6; Fridays, 1 to 9.)



Jason Moran, at the Jazz Gallery (see Night Life—Jazz and Standards).

EDEL RODRIGUEZ

WHITNEY MUSEUM AT PHILIP MORRIS
120 Park Ave., at 42nd St. (878-2550)—A pair of exhibitions treat the concrete corporate atrium as Toyland. Paul Henry Ramirez turns the white-cube side gallery into a walk-in painting. Bubbles and arabesques of hot pink and maroon swoop across the walls; parti-colored polka dots sprout fine, dark lines like oddly realistic hair, as if Dr. Seuss had grown up on Jugendstil design. Meanwhile, in the atrium, Teresita Fernandez hangs a canopy of translucent plastic poles, tinted blue and white, across the Forty-second Street entrance, a suspended river or solidified air current one must duck under. Stephen Hendee also favors translucent plastic—milky, corrugated sheets of it that form a sprawling crystal, lit from within in jewel tones that intensify as day dies down outside. Ester Partegàs is the odd woman out with an Oldenburg-like Chinese take-out bag that reaches nearly to the ceiling, complete with throw-rug-size receipt and eight-foot chopsticks. Through Oct. 11. (Open weekdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 7:30.)

AMERICAN CRAFT MUSEUM
40 W. 53rd St. (956-3535)—**"Changing Hands: Art Without Reservation"** presents decorative objects—textiles, jewelry, ceramics—by contemporary Native American artists whose work both draws on and challenges traditional forms. (The first of a three-part series, this show focusses on the Southwest.) Highlights include Christine McHorse's gourd-shaped vessel, with a lustrous glaze and curving organic form that rival any Edward Weston pepper, and Charles Supplee's corn-shaped pendant, with lapis lazuli, coral, and diamonds in lieu of kernels. Some works err on the side of heavy-handed whimsy, as in Diego Romero's bowl, which relocates Manet's "Déjeuner sur l'Herbe" to New Mexico's Frijoles Canyon. Through Sept. 20. (Open 10 to 6 and Thursday evenings until 8.)

AMERICAN FOLK ART MUSEUM
45 W. 53rd St. (265-1040)—The museum began its collection in 1962 with the gift of a gate in the shape of an American flag. Forty years later, the same gate opens **"American Anthem,"** a densely packed show of art and objects dating from the Colonial period through the present day. Works range from the utilitarian and conventional (quilts) to the decorative and bizarre (a gold-painted tower of turkey bones). Many objects celebrate American patriotism, as in an intricately carved cabinet topped with a silhouette of the Statue of Liberty from the late nineteenth century. A stark contrast to ideals of freedom is provided by the troublesome inclusion of a three-dimensional "game of chance," from the mid-nineteenth century, depicting a slave auction. Through Jan. 5. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 10 to 6, and Friday evenings until 8.)

COOPER-HEWITT NATIONAL DESIGN MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 91st St. (849-8300)—The ambitious if scattershot **"Skin: Surface, Substance, and Design"** makes a case for skin-deep design, showcasing objects from the past five years which traffic in ideas about membrane and surface. Fashion and furniture are well represented (there's even a blue nylon windbreaker that doubles as an inflatable chair), but the curator, Ellen Lupton, casts a wide net, presenting contributions from disciplines as diverse as biotechnology (a fascinating sampling of artificial skin and cartilage) and filmmaking (clips of movies from "Frankenstein" to "Aliens"). Sometimes this pluralism is stretched too thin, as with a visually tepid shelf of "cosmeceuticals," skin-care products packaged to resemble medical supplies. Through Sept. 15. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

JEWISH MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. (423-3200)—Toward the end of **"The City of K: Franz Kafka and Prague,"** a wall text warns, "You are now about to enter the Threshold." If this sounds like the kind of thing you might expect to find at the entrance to a carnival ride, that's no accident. Organized for Barcelona's Centro de Cultura Contemporánea, "City of K" gives Kafka the Vincent Price treatment, with black walls, spotlights, and a soundtrack of spooky slitherings, thuds, and chimes. At one point, a photograph of Kafka and his fiancée, Felice Bauer, trembles as though projected onto the surface of a puddle. Then Kafka begins shrinking. Finally he vanishes altogether. "City of K" may prove to be the "Showgirls" of the museum world, an exhibition so egregious and dopey that it is remembered for years with campy affection. Through Jan. 5. ♦ **"New York: Capital of Photography"** offers an exhilarating archive of New York street life, seen through the lenses of people like Hine, Strand, Shahn, Model, Weegee, Winogrand, and Goldin. The hundred-some pictures are hung in thoughtful chronological groupings, but the show is best enjoyed picture by picture, as a feast of bizarre microhappenings. On every wall, the magic of technology catches ordinary New Yorkers in the middle of things—sentence, sip, scratch, sob, air kiss. Organized by a fellow street photographer and critic, Max Kozloff, the show comes with a handsome and daring catalogue, in which Kozloff, following a tip from William Klein, boils down the difference between Jewish and goyish photography. Guess which group is characterized by a "personal reticence blended into an aura of entitlement"? Through

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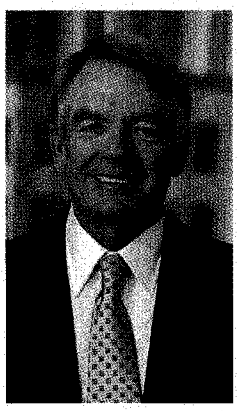

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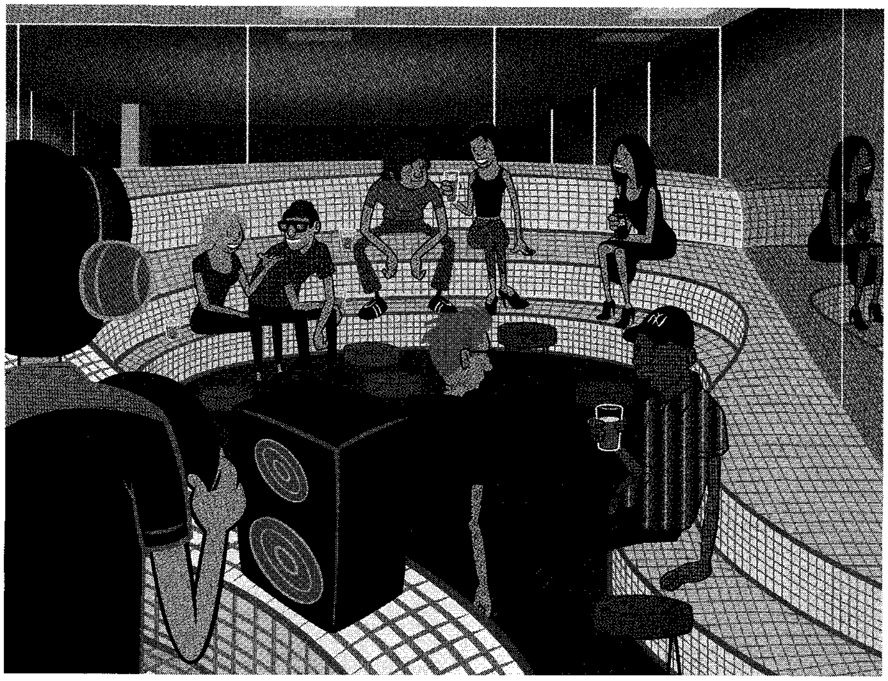
Sept. 2. (Open Sundays 10 to 5:45, Mondays through Wednesdays, 11 to 5:45, and Thursdays, 11 to 8.)

MORGAN LIBRARY

29 E. 36th St. (685-0008)—**“Honor, Glory, Adventure: Books for Boys in the Age of Pierpont Morgan”** offers a selection of ingeniously made, innocently grand entertainments for young gentlemen. Lodestars of children’s literature appear in first editions: the tales of Hans Christian Andersen, “The Wizard of Oz,” “Black Beauty” (curiously subtitled “The Uncle Tom’s Cabin of the Horse”). More captivating, though, are the various pre-cinematic viewing contraptions: the French Phenakistiscope and Polyorama Panoptique, the German Kinematefor, and assorted anamorphic images on cards, displayed with mirrored cylinders in which to view the distortions restored to proper shape. Through Sept. 8. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, 10:30 to 5; Fridays, 10:30 to 8; Saturdays, 10:30 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)



Smith Street’s Bar Below draws a cool Brooklyn crowd (see Night Life—Clubs).

MICHAEL WELDON

MUSEO DEL BARRIO

Fifth Ave. at 104th St. (831-7272)—**“Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera, and Twentieth-Century Mexican Art: The Jacques and Natasha Gelman Collection.”** Seven self-portraits by Kahlo form the heart of this show tracing the development of Mexican modernism from the teens to the fifties. The most riveting is “Diego on My Mind,” which shows Kahlo’s third eye sprouting a picture of the Mexican muralist while tendrils of her hair curl outward; she’s both Medusa and a black widow at the center of her web. The show also includes numerous portraits of art patrons Jacques and Natasha Gelman. They range from a hackneyed Angel Zárraga image of Mr. Gelman, a movie producer, on the set, to a sexually charged Rivera of the glamorous Mrs. Gelman surrounded by calla lilies. Through Sept. 8. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN

1 Bowling Green (514-3700)—Japan has its Living Treasures, and Mexico’s Fomento Cultural Banamex has recently instituted a similar program, identifying a hundred and eighty-one living masters of traditional folk arts. In **“Great Masters of Mexican Folk Art,”** more than five hundred works by these artisans are displayed, from brilliantly painted ceramics to dazzling embroideries and gleaming silver. Items are arranged according to their materials, allowing comparison between different achievements in wood, wax, stone, tin, leather, beadwork, paper, and glass. Among the most amazing entries are a group of doll-house-size chairs exquisitely carved from horn by Luis Felipe Murillo Carrillo and Carlos Chacón Gómez and a pair of gold-and-flower-encrusted Day of the Dead skulls by Wenceslao Rivas Contreras, which look like polychromed marble but are actually molded sugar. Through March 15. ♦ **“Booming Out: Mohawk Iron Workers Build New York.”** For a hundred years, Mohawk ironworkers have been “booming out,” travelling from communities in upstate New York and Canada to the city, working on bridges and skyscrapers from the Empire State Building to the George Washington Bridge. This show documents six generations of Mohawk men from two nations (Akwesane and Kahnawake), combining pictures by photojournalists (including Lewis Hine’s famous image of a precipitous lunch on an I-beam) with images shot by the boomers themselves. (All are mounted on panels and interspersed with explanatory text.) There is a section devoted to the World Trade Center, dealing with both its construction and its demise—and the museum’s location, just a few blocks from Ground Zero, heightens the impact of this already moving show. Through Oct. 15. (Open daily, 10 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8.)

NEUE GALERIE

1048 Fifth Ave., at 86th St. (628-6200)—This already indispensable town-house museum mounts a new and potent installation of topflight Austrian and German fine and decorative art from the modern era. There’s more terrific stuff from the Neue’s seemingly boundless holdings, including works by Klimt and Schiele, suites of startling erotic drawings, and brilliant pocket surveys of German Expressionism, Neue Sachlichkeit, and the Bauhaus. The general effect is both illuminating and enigmatic. What is it that sulfurous satires by Grosz and Dix have in common with classic chairs by Breuer and Mies? A cool, sleazy nude by the delectably repellent Christian Schad seems to know. Through Sept. 1. (Open Fridays, 11 to 9, and Saturdays through Mondays, 11 to 6.)

NEW MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

583 Broadway (219-1222)—Matisse said that art should be like an armchair; for the Brazilian Neo-Constructivist Hélio Oiticica, it’s more like a private movie theatre. He pioneered the multimedia “environments” that led to installation art, and during a fertile period in New York City in 1973 he made a group of works he called “Quasi-Cinemas.” Resurrected with the help of Oiticica’s original collaborator, the Brazilian filmmaker Neville D’Almeida, the “Quasi-Cinemas” are interactive rooms—one filled with sleeping mats, one with balloons and sand, one crisscrossed with hammocks. Music plays as slides of various hipsters (Hendrix, Marilyn, a bevy of Brazilian transvestites) are projected onto the ceiling and the walls. Through Oct. 13. (Open Wednesdays and Sundays, noon to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, noon to 8.)

NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2 W. 77th St., at Central Park W. (873-3400)—For the hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the American Society of Civil Engineers, the museum offers a tutorial called **“Me, Myself, and Infrastructure,”** which holds forth on engineering and the design and maintenance of the man-made world. The structures under investigation range from the near-invisible, like water mains and cell-phone towers, to the conspicuous, like dams and Wal-Marts. The show, originally scheduled for the World Financial Center this past spring, concludes with a professional disclaimer for the fall of the World Trade Center: “No skyscraper design could ever have taken into account the conditions of the September 11 attack.” Similar apologias (there was “no way of recognizing” that the St. Francis Dam was built on weak rock) and political gambits (the federal government receives C’s and D’s on an infrastructure-maintenance report card) contribute to a sense that the show, which doesn’t seem to know whether it’s meant for adults or children, is slightly out of place at its present venue. Through Sept. 15. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6.)

P.S. 1 CONTEMPORARY ART CENTER

22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City (718-784-2084)—**“Mexico City: An Exhibition About the Exchange Rates of Bodies and Values”** is the arch title of a visceral, important show. Videos, photography, and installations by nineteen Mexicans and resident foreigners peg Mexico City as the Weimar Berlin of our days, where urban adventurers confront epic social chaos with ultra-dark irony and cosmopolitan élan. There’s some rough stuff here: a room filled with a fog of water that was used to wash corpses in a morgue (it smells musty) and videotapes made by two sociopath artists of themselves stealing car stereos. Other works rankle more subtly, such as a portable version of Barnett Newman’s “Broken Obelisk” made from the pink plastic tarpaulin typically used by Mexican street venders, by Eduardo Abaroa. The show’s mordant wit echoes the rapturous fatalism of the recent terrific Mexican movies “Amores Perros” and “Y Tu Mamá También.” Something rich and strange is afoot in Mexico City. Through Sept. 2. ♦ The seven artists in **“Heart of Gold: Capitalism”** explore the relationship between commerce and aesthetics with mixed success. Chris Doyle gilds the gritty steps to the Williamsburg Bridge (three deadpan photos document the process); Peter Walsh offers “Hoard,” an annotated bibliography of how society creates value (entries range from Mr. Peanut to P. T. Barnum, and free copies are available). A disproportionate amount of gallery space is devoted to “Climatex Lifecycle,” a biodegradable commercial textile (artist Hope Ginsburg works in the company’s marketing department). Worms transform remnants into compost near a pair of benches upholstered with the no-fun reminder “food = waste.” Through Sept. 14. (Open Thursdays through Mondays, noon to 6.)

STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM

144 W. 125th St. (864-4500)—Beauford Delaney (1901-79) left Knoxville, Tennessee, for New York just in time for the Harlem Renaissance. Soon, he left again, along with other mid-century black expatriates, for Paris and the Riviera, where he spent the rest of his life exploring the expressive properties of canary, butter, lemon, and acid tones. For **“The Color Yellow: Beauford Delaney,”** twenty-nine canvases, painted from the late forties until his death, display his unusual palette preference. Delaney felt that yellow was a color of redemption; after seeing works like the massive and serene portrait of Marian Anderson (1965), one is inclined to agree. A few works in a more agitated, Van Gogh-ish palette (bitter chartreuse and dark plum, for example) are less successful, as when a

bright but choppy sea of brassy glow threatens to swallow up Ella Fitzgerald (1968). Through Sept. 22. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Summer-hours warning: many galleries are open Mondays through Fridays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. Others follow the normal Tuesday-to-Saturday schedule. It's best to call ahead.

JOSEPH CORNELL
When the homegrown Surrealist died in 1972, sixty or so large envelopes were found in his Utopia Parkway home. Each contained a smallish photocollage, made from Cornell's typically macaronic imagery: parakeets, constellations, cacti, Renaissance cherubs, and attractive young women. Displayed together for the first time, these late collages make a dense, dizzying, uneven array. The weaker ones are lightly altered pinups, evidence of Cornell's susceptibility to gusts of sentimental prurience. The best are as ineffable as Cornell's famous boxes: little two-dimensional vitrines of eeriness, loopiness, and melancholy. Through Sept. 13. (C&M, 45 E. 78th St. 861-0020.)

ADRIAN STOKES / GEORGE FITZPATRICK
The British critic Adrian Stokes (1902-72), best remembered for eccentric writings on art, architecture, and ballet, took up painting in his thirties, aiming to make pictures with "no movement, no rigidity, no flourish, no acuteness, no pointedness, no drama." Despite these prohibitions, his nudes and still-lifes are oddly, if not instantly, beguiling. Painted with nervous, semi-transparent strokes of olive, emerald, and ochre, they project a diaphanous, algae-flavored luminosity. Fitzpatrick, whose work is on view upstairs, writes out classical texts (from Homer and Su Tung-p'o, among others) in a neatly illegible calligraphy of his own devising. The results are erudite and elegant, with a faint whiff of classroom punishment. Through Aug. 30. (Salander/O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. 879-6606.)

NAM JUNE PAIK
The pioneer of multimedia installation has parked a fleet of classic cars, all painted silver, around a thirties-era radio tower, which is subject to hourly transmissions of laser beams ricocheting off nearby mirrors. The interiors of the cars are rigged with old hi-fis and stereos, all of which play Mozart, creating a sweeping nostalgia for bygone visions of the whiz-bang future. (30 Rockefeller Plaza.)

SQUIRE VICKERS
Anyone who has admired the sweetly incongruous faience tiles of pastoral scenes on the walls of the BMT Canal Street station has Squire Vickers to thank. The architect with a name straight out of Washington Irving designed the interior of the New York subway system in the early twentieth century. The paintings in this charming little show are reminiscent of mosaics, thanks to Vickers's prismatic compositions and his use of large-weave burlap in lieu of canvas. Best of all, you can enjoy the scenes of fantasy architecture and arboreal landscapes without baking on a subway platform. Through Sept. 14. (Shephard & Derom, 58 E. 79th St. 861-4050.)

"CONCENTRATIONS"
The gallery goes subdivision in six mini-exhibitions organized from its inventory. The unrelated installations run the gamut from mediocre (paintings of Niagara Falls, including two cloying scenes by Jasper Francis Cropsey, replete with rainbows) to magnificent (drawings of Gold Rush-era California by German artist Adolph Schwartz, including a stunning interior view of a mine shaft). The thematic juxtapositions can be jarring, as when a hilarious section of Gilbert and George's "Postcard Sculptures" from the seventies (assemblages like "Prince and Parents," which sports row upon row of a dorky Prince Charles) segues into bland portraits by art-school administrator Frank von der Lancken. Through Sept. 13. (Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St. 535-8810.)

"DANGEROUS BEAUTY"
This intelligent, if cautionary, show details our cultural obsession with beauty. Pillowy lips have never looked worse than in photographs by Orlan documenting her own surgical procedure. Hernan Bas lampoons the quest for thinness in a photograph of a wraithlike man shooting up Slim-Fast. Fear of aging is touched on by Margi Geerlinks's photograph of an elderly twin literally smoothing out her sister's wrinkles—thanks to digital manipulation. Much of the work has a Surrealist bent, notably Daniella Dooling's "REMdress," a negligee made of thousands of fake eyelashes, just the thing to wear to tea with Meret Oppenheim. Through Sept. 8. (The Jewish Community Center, 334 Amsterdam Ave., at 76th St. 646-505-4444.)

"THE GREEKS AND THE SEA"
In Greece, one is never more than forty miles from the sea; the ancient Athenians, who lived "to swim and learn letters," were one of the first truly maritime powers. Most of this exhibit of Hellenic seacraft is haphazardly arranged, with ancient schooners listing alongside British-made steamers procured for the War of Independence, but two examples from antiquity redeem the trip. The mighty trireme was built after the Oracle at Delphi decreed that only "wooden walls" would save Athens from the Persians. Powered by two hundred oarsmen seated in three banks below decks, the warship speared its prow into the bellies of enemy vessels until they sank. By the Byzantine era, the Greeks had refined their attack: the *dromon* discharged "liquid fire" from its nose, a substance said to be so combustible that no sea could extinguish the flames; snake- and scorpion-hurling catapults provided backup. Through Sept. 26. (Foundation for Hellenic Culture, 7 W. 57th St. 308-6908.)

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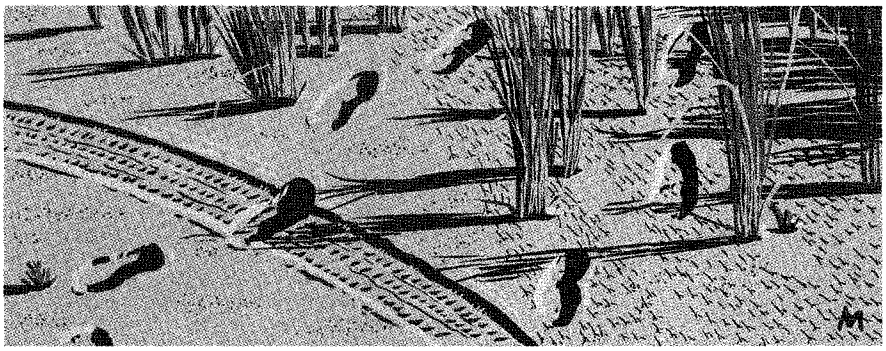

MATT MADDEN

Breezy Point is a place where you can pull off a neat, necessary trick of urban living: escaping the city while remaining within the city limits. A slender peninsula of dune grass and stunted trees that separates Jamaica Bay from the Atlantic Ocean, Breezy (as it's nicknamed) is one of the few spots in New York City with beaches that would look right on a postcard. There are pieces of driftwood, clamshells, and dried-out seaweed. Seagulls and terns stand around in groups. The dunes are high, the water is green-blue, and there's a rock jetty at the tip, complete with a marine light tower.

Technically, you're still in Queens. The striped bass, fluke, and weakfish that feed along the shores probably don't know the difference, nor do the horseshoe crabs that mate in the shallows. The city asserts itself at night, when the lights of Coney Island appear just across the water, along with the skyline of Manhattan.

Like most things in New York, getting to Breezy Point is all about access. The so-called "fisherman's lot" holds about twenty cars and requires a parking permit. To purchase one, take Exit 11 off the Belt Parkway, cross the Marine Park Bridge, hang a right, and then pull into Fort Tilden on the left. (If you are on a bike, you can hop the A train to Rockaway Park/Beach 116th Street and start pedalling.) The fort has been defending the harbor since the First World War. Now, with its plant-covered lookouts and abandoned missile silos, it's more of a Cold War relic.

Inside the small, peaceful ranger station there are carefully labelled cases of dead specimens and a tank with a very alive thirteen-year-old snapping turtle. Show the ranger in residence a fishing pole, write a check to the government for twenty-five bucks, and you're good for parking until the new year rolls around.

Breezy also happens to be one of the only parts of New York City that is growing, literally. Enough sand has drifted from the Hamptons and Fire Island to add a hundred acres of new beach—land that would be prime real estate if not for the piping plovers. These small, stocky, and extremely shy birds fly here from the South, touch down on the dunes, and instantly enjoy the protection of the Endangered Species Act. Some people don't like this, and wear T-shirts that say things like "Piping Plover: The Other White Meat." The bird is not exactly a tough urban type—its favorite defense tactic is to pretend that it's wounded—but it's not hard to feel kinship with a plover when you hear the wind whistle through the dune grass.

Some places thrive at certain times of the year and wilt at others. Breezy has year-round appeal. The summer splits between morning anglers and illicit daytime sunbathers (nude, on occasion), with the fishermen returning in the evening. In the fall, the plovers leave for their migration south, and are soon replaced by men who drive around in 4 x 4s, looking for schools of blues while listening to the Jets game. This is also the best time for bird-watching, with the occasional snowy owl arriving for a cameo. In the winter, the shoreline is usually deserted, and it's easy to brood and feel as though you're starring in your very own Winslow Homer painting—at least until the Concorde takes off and you cover your ears to drown out the noise.

—*Michael Agger*

"SUMMER IN THE GARDEN"

In the early twentieth century, American sculptors turned from public monuments to smaller works intended for private settings. A dozen such garden statues, from Bonnie MacLeary's tabletop fountain of a girl bitten by a crab to Janet Scudder's cherub perched on a globe, form the centerpiece of this show, which also includes paintings and garden furniture. A kitschy pair of French-coiffed standard poodles by Louis Paul Jonas (intended as gatepost sculptures) could be the ancestors of Jeff Koons's puppy. The examples of furniture, reproductions from Mount Vernon and Edith Wharton's estate, are numerous and fetching but make the gallery feel a little like a showroom. Through Aug. 30. (James Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St. 535-5767.)

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

"KAGEKI METONYMICS"

What's likable about Japanese cartooning is its stylization, its reflexive anti-realism. What's less likable is on view here, in a concentrated dose of sexual violence that features more than a dozen *manga* artists with interchangeable fantasies. Basta on the *manga*, please. Through Sept. 7. (Stux, 529 W. 20th St. 352-1600.)

DALZIEL + SCULLION / MARK DION / DAN GRAHAM

Two of these three *folies* seem designed for irony: Dalziel + Scullion puts solid aluminum tents in a park where people regularly bed down for the night, and Mark Dion presents a camouflaged "Urban Wildlife Observation Unit" in the limited ecosystem between Broadway and Madison. Only the two rooms of Dan Graham's glass slice-of-pie playhouse, "Bisected Triangle, Interior Curve," seem to fit in their surroundings, both in the material, smoked glass, and in the purpose, an homage to the Flatiron Building and the art of people-watching. Through Oct. 31. (Public Art Fund and Target Art in the Park, Madison Square Park, Fifth Ave. at 23rd St. 229-7607.)

"3000°"

Three thousand degrees is, roughly, iron's melting point, and these four sculptures all give an impression of solids morphing into other forms. Michael Dominick's modified radiator actually radiates heat, so much so that worried neighbors called the F.D.N.Y. Three sculptures—Mary Ziegler's kinetic, electromagnetic work; Win Knowlton's rectangular steel volume perforated on all sides like a complex piece of grillwork; and a glob by James Hegge, made by knocking a fibreglass object repeatedly off a roof—all comment, we are told, on entropy and formlessness, vertigo and displacement. The sculptures work nicely together. But curatorial efforts to tie it all into the work of Robert Smithson, Richard Serra, and Georges Bataille, and to propose that these three took up the aesthetic slack in American art post-Pollock—well, that's getting overheated. Through Sept. 7. (Rodgers/9W, 529 W. 20th St. 414-9810.)

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

JENNY HOLZER

"Turn Soft and Lovely Any Time You Have The Chance," advise a pair of nylons and a wooden postcard in this engaging collection of multiples and documentation on view at Printed Matter, a haven of artists' books. Everyday objects—pencils, golf balls, a jigsaw puzzle—are emblazoned with Holzer's enigmatic and pithy texts. Much of Holzer's work has a political edge, evidenced here by a condom wrapper printed with the phrase "Expiring for Love is Beautiful but Stupid." Through Sept. 30. (535 W. 22nd St. 925-0325.)

"RING OF REMEMBRANCE"

The Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, the ad-hoc state-and-city agency charged with the World Trade Center rebuilding efforts, displays land-use proposals and maquettes of six plans for the site alongside photographs of the location from 1949 to the present. A three-dimensional animation of the plans plays continuously, and two tables (where viewers can write comments—the point of the exhibit) surround a model of Lower Manhattan with a transparent re-creation of the absent towers. Through Aug. 30. (Federal Hall, 26 Wall St. 825-6888.)

GALLERIES—BROOKLYN & QUEENS

NINA KATCHADOURIAN
New Yorkers are used to the sirens of their habitat. But what if car alarms were just another species of organic song? From this quixotic premise comes Katchadourian's public-art project "Natural Car Alarms," sponsored by the Sculpture Center and migrating through the curbs of Queens, from MOMA QNS to the Sculpture Center, Socrates Sculpture Park, and P.S. 1. Her rigged cars are identifiable only by their sunny yellow bumper stickers and windshield decals of birds. But once the flock starts squawking, chirping, and shrieking, heads snap around in double and triple takes. Through Sept. 22. (Sculpture Center, 44-19 Purves St., Long Island City. For dates and locations, call 718-361-1750, or visit www.sculpture-center.org.)

EMPIRE-FULTON FERRY PARK OUTDOOR SCULPTURE SHOW
At first glance, this twentieth annual show on the lawn between the Brooklyn and Manhattan bridges looks obsessed with coziness: two small playhouses, two plaster-of-Paris-draped playpens, and three beehive-shaped grass huts read as refuges. Closer to the water, surreal photocollages of the view, ghostly draped figures, and two works directly modelled on the World Trade Center make clear what all those walls are meant to keep out—the changed skyline, which dominates the park's huge view of lower Manhattan. Through Sept. 2. (Dock St. at the East River.)

"CONSUMING PLACES"
When Creative Time couldn't get its usual summer exhibition space, the Brooklyn Bridge Anchorage, the organization traded up to three vast structures even closer to the waterfront. Naturally, this year's show is enamored of architecture, from 212Box LLC's glass-walled studio apartments cum billboards, designed to be attached to the sides of buildings, to the sound installation of Bridge-area ambient noise, circa 1983, installed by Bill Fontana in one of the neighborhood's most exhilarating landmarks, the Tobacco Warehouse. The building's worn brick walls, wide arched windows onto the city, and lack of a roof give it the quality of a Roman ruin that recalls our industrial glory days. Through Oct. 27. (16 Main St., at Water St. 212-206-6674.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

JOHN COFFER
For the past twenty years, Coffer has crossed and recrossed the American continent in horse- and ox-drawn carts, seeking to master the long-lost art of the wet-plate collodion process, the world's most popular photographic method a hundred and forty years ago. While his large-format, handcrafted tintypes recapture the haunting thrills of photography's beginnings, the dark glow of these images etched straight onto the surface of black enamelled iron conveys something more than the willful anachronism of a committed Luddite. Richly detailed exposures of humble woodpiles, kerosene lamps, and farm machinery convey a timeless reverence. "Milk Prayer," a self-portrait, reveals the emotional depth of Coffer's soft-spoken, spiritual aesthetic. Through Oct. 10. (Melville, 213 Water St. 748-8600.)

"ELEVATED CITY"
These anonymous, archival images document the astounding birth, the crowded life, and the summary death of the New York elevated transit system. The images include awe-inspiring shots of the epic yet intricate ironwork of the Queensborough Bridge and the haunting geometry of "South Span of Second Avenue Elevated Drawbridge Over Harlem River, February 2, 1915," where piers, tracks, stilts, and shadows merge into a snakelike abstraction. Some of these enlarged reproductions deliver entrancing mosaics of cigar-store-and-pool-parlor cityscape; in others the trains quite literally hurtle toward heaven. On May 12, 1955, the last of Manhattan's vintage Els pulled out of Chatham Square. Death had loomed for more than a decade. Even for those who never set foot on an El, the dilapidated scrap metal and discarded ads depicted in "Demolition of the 81st Street Station, Ninth Avenue Elevated, November 19, 1940," evoke a loss that transcends nostalgia. Through Nov. 6. (New York Transit Museum, Grand Central Terminal, Gallery Annex. 878-0106.)

Short List

GEORGE TICE
International Center of Photography, 1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. 857-0000. Through Sept 1.

CLASSICAL MUSIC CONCERTS IN TOWN

"SCHUBERT SERENADES BROADWAY": TEDESCA STRING QUARTET
In a free lunchtime concert, the quartet (and a cellist friend) perform Schubert's String Quintet in C Major, D. 956. (Trinity Church, Broadway at Wall St. Aug. 29 at 1.)

BARGEMUSIC
Bargemusic perseveres through the Labor Day doldrums. The cellist Ronald Thomas and the pianist Mihae Lee, longtime regulars at the floating chamber-music series, present two programs. Aug. 29-30 at 7:30: Solo cello music by Bach (the Suite No. 5 in C Minor), along with Brahms's Sonata in E Minor for Cello and Piano and Schumann's "Adagio and Allegro." ♦ Aug. 31 at 7:30 and Sept. 1 at 4: Brahms's Sonata in F Major, along with music by Beethoven (the Cello Sonata in D Major) and Hindemith (the Sonata for Solo Cello). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-2083.)

SUNDAYS ON THE ISLAND
More string music for a quiet weekend (by Bach and Beethoven), performed by the violinist Annaliesa Place and the pianist Mariko Kaneda. A reception follows at the concert's venue, Le Refuge, a French country-style inn nestled among the yacht slips of City Island. (620 City Island Ave., the Bronx. For information about tickets, call 212-927-9194. Sept. 1 at 12:30.)

CONCERTS OUT OF TOWN

TANGLEWOOD
Boston's classical-music outpost turns its energies to a three-day jazz festival, its roster stocked with reliable names. Aug. 30 at 8: An evening with the Cuban trumpet maestro Arturo Sandoval and the Puerto Rican jazz flutist Nestor Torres. (Ozawa Hall.) ♦ Aug. 31 at 1:30: The Tanglewood Theatre is the spot for an "Organ Summit," featuring the Jimmy McGriff Quartet, the Joey DeFrancesco Trio, and, as special guest, the saxophonist David (Fathead) Newman. ♦ Aug. 31 at 3: The ambassadorial Marian McPartland, taping for her NPR show, hosts an afternoon of piano jazz with Sir Roland Hanna. (Ozawa Hall.) ♦ Aug. 31 at 8: An honest-to-goodness jazz artist's latest album goes platinum, and then she sells out headlining shows around the world. If Diana Krall's "The Look of Love" comes off as fluffier than her earlier recordings, it's still the work of an authentic and individual singer who hasn't gone pop on us quite yet. She's the headliner for a concert in the Music Shed, which opens with a tribute to Charlie Parker performed by the drummer Roy Haynes and Birds of a Feather, including Roy Hargrove, Kenny Garrett, Christian McBride, and Dave Kikoski. ♦ Sept. 1 at 2: The scene moves back to Ozawa Hall for a concert by the Roy Hargrove Quintet, along with their guest, the vocalist Roberta Gamborini. ♦ Sept. 1 at 8: Dave Brubeck, the dean of American jazz composers, brings the curtain down with a concert, with his quartet, at Ozawa Hall. (Lenox, Mass. 888-266-1200. These are the final concerts of the season.)

MAVERICK CONCERTS
Aug. 31 at 8: A performance by Parthenia, a glowing group of viol players that is one of the brightest lights in New York's early-music scene. In addition to music by Byrd, Morley, Scheidt, and Purcell (with the mezzo-soprano Alexandra Montano), they perform two new works by Brian Fennelly ("Variations on 'Watkins' Ale' " and "Tombeau and Tango"), who, like many of the contemporary composers Maverick promotes, is a Hudson Valley resident. ♦ Sept. 1 at 3: To wind down the season, the series presents an afternoon of piano pieces (by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, and Chabrier) and songs (by Strauss and Lee Hoiby) performed by the pianist Brian Zeger and the soprano Serena Benedetti. (Woodstock, N.Y. For more information, call 845-679-8217. These are the final concerts of the summer.)

MUSIC MOUNTAIN
This venerable string-quartet festival nestled in the Berkshire foothills—which completes its seventy-third season this year—may have a comfy, old-shoe feel, but it's performed a great service (along with presenting hundreds of rewarding concerts) by offering a valuable showcase for the best of the younger ensembles. These are the final concerts of the year. Aug. 31 at 8: Ruth Laredo, an elegant veteran of the Romantic piano repertory, sits in with the Shanghai Quartet for an evening of Beethoven (including the Piano Quartet in E-Flat Major) and Shostakovich (the Quartet No. 3 in F Major). ♦ Sept. 1 at 3: Laredo and the Shanghai wrap up the season with a program of Mozart, more Beethoven (the Quartet in B-Flat Major, Op. 18, No. 6), and Franck (the magisterial Piano Quintet in F Minor). The concert will be preceded at 2 by the Canine Quadrille, a congenial group of dancing dogs (with their human friends) who have wowed, or at least bowwowed, audiences in seasons past. (Falls Village, Conn. 860-824-7126.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

A GATHERING OF THE TRIBES
In the early nineteen-nineties, Steve Cannon, a blind former humanities professor at City College, decided to start publishing a magazine, to run a gallery, and, in general, to open up his Lower East Side brownstone to the neighborhood's artists and poets. From Aug. 29-31 he celebrates ten years of conversation and creativity with a multimedia, multi-day event featuring a gallery show and performances by Max Blagg, Reg E. Gaines, Eve Packer, and many other poets. Jemeel Moondoc, Roy Campbell, Charles Gayle, and other jazz musicians will provide the music and a tribute to another East Village creative force, the saxophonist Charlie Parker, whose birthday is Aug. 29. "In the old days this would have been called a collective," Cannon says. "It's a group of artists and writers getting together in the spirit of showing what they love—their art." (285 E. 3rd St. 674-8262. Performances start at 6.)

TUGBOAT FESTIVAL
The workhorses of the harbor get a day off during the Intrepid Sea-Air-Space Museum's tenth annual festival. Highlights include a parade and water display led by a New York Fire Department fire boat, a tugboat race down the Hudson from the Seventy-ninth Street Boat Basin, and a nose-to-nose pushing contest. (Pier 86, Twelfth Ave. at 46th St. For more information, call 245-0072. Sept. 1 from 12:30 to 4.)

MOVIES OPENING

*CORPUS CALLOSUM

An experimental film written and directed by Michael Snow ("Wavelength"). Opening Aug. 28. (Film Forum.)

FEARDOTCOM

A detective (Stephen Dorff) teams up with a Department of Health researcher (Natascha McElhone) to investigate a series of mysterious deaths connected to a Web site. William Malone ("House on Haunted Hill") directed. Opening Aug. 30.

MAD LOVE

Vicente Aranda directed this historical drama about the political and passionate marriage of Joanna (Pilar López de Ayala), the daughter of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, and Philip (Daniele Liotti), the Archduke of Austria. In Spanish and Castilian. Opening Aug. 30. (Quad Cinema.)

FILM NOTES

AUSTIN POWERS IN GOLDMEMBER

Comedic comfort food. After a spectacular opening salvo (loaded with cameos), the third installment of the swinging-spy shag-ology settles into familiar terrain: Dr. Evil (one of the four roles played by Mike Myers) doing his nefarious best to take over the world. Once again, Myers displays his gift for mimicry and his ability to mix it up with a midget. His cast includes an electric Beyoncé Knowles as his female sidekick and a dapper yet underused Michael Caine as his dad; they're ebullient foils to the script's formless frenzy.—*Bruce Diones* (Battery Park 16, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Metro Twin, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 72nd Street East, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

BLOOD WORK

An absorbing thriller that is really about Clint Eastwood's body—both frail and strong, seventy-two years old and scarred for the occasion, but looking good at any age. Eastwood, who directed, plays a retired Los Angeles F.B.I. agent who, after a heart attack, received the transplanted organ of a recently murdered woman. Against the advice of his doctor (Anjelica Huston), he decides to track down the murderer. The movie unfolds slowly and methodically, with great attention to the details of the plot; understanding slowly gathers in the mind of the hero. With Jeff Daniels as the shamefaced yacht-basin bum who lives on the same pier as Eastwood. Brian Helgeland, a specialist in tangled webs, adapted the Michael Connelly novel. —*David Denby* (Reviewed in our issue of 8/19 & 26/02.) (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, Sutton 1 and 2, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

CAT PEOPLE

The psychoanalyst (Tom Conway) calmly explains to his patient (Simone Simon) that her idea that she is turning into a member of the cat family is a fantasy; she silences him with fang and talon. Val Lewton made his name as a producer with this ironic horror film, produced for R.K.O. on a minuscule budget. While other B-budget horror producers were still using gorillas, haunted houses, and disembodied arms, Lewton and the director, Jacques Tourneur, employed suggestion, creepy sound effects, and inventive camera angles, leaving everything to the viewers' fear-filled imagination. Some of the sequences, such as the scare at the swimming pool, are in their own way classic.—*Pauline Kael* (Walter Reade Theatre; Aug. 31.)

THE DECALOGUE

Another dose of fun from Krzysztof Kieslowski: ten hours of cancer, abortion, incest, strangulation, and the thwarting of brotherly love, mostly set amid the rainy projects of an oppressed Polish town. This series was made for Polish television in 1988, when the nation was still under martial law, and comprises ten hour-long films, each devoted to one of the Ten Commandments. Given those factors, the whole endeavor could have collapsed into rusty political parable, but, though Kieslowski's subjects are often parodies of gloom, he picks his way through them with a gathering delicacy and a frowning ironic wit. Anyone who associates art films with monotonous meditation will be surprised to find these movies so packed with stuff; the director doesn't shy away from murder, car chases, or fine-boned blondes, or from the Hollywood hook of a mysterious letter that warns, "To be opened after my death . . ." Kieslowski spies shards of beauty in the rubble of crummy lives, and seems wholly at ease with the random possibility of miracles. Thou shalt not miss. In Polish.—*Anthony Lane* (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

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EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT SEX* (*BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK)

Released in 1972 at the height of the sexual revolution, Woody Allen's takeoff on Dr. David Reuben's best-selling self-help book boasts some of his funniest bits of moviemaking. He answers seven questions in madcap episodes that have nothing to do with the book. "What Is Sodomy?"—a small masterpiece of deadpan farce—features an inspired Gene Wilder as a doctor who falls in love at first touch with a sheep. "Why Do Some Women Have Trouble Reaching Orgasm?" drolly offsets the lowdown plight of frustrated husband (Allen) and frigid wife (Louise Lasser) with a chichi parody of Italian art films. "Are Transvestites Homosexuals?" captures Lou Jacobi at his most fearless as a proper husband and father who luxuriates in a bold orange-and-white ensemble. And "What Happens During Ejaculation?" remains Allen's most virtuosic and uproarious example of concept comedy yet. He sets this sexual-slapstick fantastic voyage inside the male brain and anatomy during lovemaking, with Tony Randall as mission control, Burt Reynolds as a cocky brain-room crewman (he gets to declare, "Proceed with erection!"), and Allen himself as a worried sperm who calms himself by playing the harmonica.—*Michael Sragow* (Moving Image; Sept. 1.)

FULL FRONTAL

Steven Soderbergh and the screenwriter Coleman Hough have attempted a neo-Godardian deconstruction of cinematic reality, but the movie turns deconstruction into hash. Actors play actors who are making a movie within the movie, but half the time we can't tell whether we're in the inner or outer movie or why we should care. There are a few intense moments in which Julia Roberts, playing a magazine reporter, flirts with Blair Underwood, who plays a handsome black TV actor hoping to get his big break, but the scenes don't go anywhere. Neither does Catherine Keener's smoldering rage as a personnel director who, for some reason, throws a plastic globe at her company's employees and asks them to name the countries in Africa. The movie is the sort of whimsical and arbitrary mess that gives experimentation a bad name.—*D.D.* (8/5/02) (BAM Rose Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, Cinema 3rd Avenue, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, and Lincoln Square.)

THE GOOD GIRL

A comedy, darkly told, with a plot that never fails to attract: is there a way out of my narrow life? Jennifer Aniston puts on a Texas accent and plays Justine Last, a clerk at a faceless superstore, which seems to be the new epicenter of modern angst. Her co-workers include a sarcastic goth girl (Zooey Deschanel), a hyper-Christian security guard (Mike White), and a hunky, teen-age malcontent (Jake Gyllenhaal) who oh-so-subtly calls himself Holden. Soon, Justine and Holden are discovering the pleasures of the stockroom together. The movie is well acted and very funny about delusions, especially the writerly kind. It also complicates our loyalties by making Justine's husband (John C. Reilly) a decent, likable guy, even if he does smoke too much pot. Everything seems poised for a great finale, with the melancholic afterglow of a good Raymond Carver story. But the movie loses its tone—tragic moments, including a suicide, get treated in a flimsy way, and camp triumphs over content. Directed by Miguel Arteta, and written by White.—*Michael Agger* (Angelika Film Center, Beekman, Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, and 62nd & Broadway.)

I CAN'T SLEEP

Claire Denis's quiet, terrifying movie failed to create a stir when it first played here. At the core of the action is the "Granny Killer," who murdered a score of elderly Parisiennes in 1987. But Denis uses the actual events to trace the varieties of alienation, fraternity, and release to be found in the city's eighteenth arrondissement (where the killings took place). The director focusses on a beautiful girl from Lithuania (Katerina Golubeva) and two brothers from Martinique (Alex Descas as a violinist unhappily married to a Frenchwoman and Richard Courcet as a struggling gay entertainer) who suss out where they fit in their host culture. The horror is not that the center of this society won't hold; it's that there seems to be no center at all. In French.—*M.S.* (Thalia Theatre; Aug. 30.)

I WALKED WITH A ZOMBIE

The producer Val Lewton specialized in economical and literate horror movies. But on its own small scale, this tensile mood piece from 1943—about love, revenge, and voodoo—is extravagantly lyrical. A riff on Charlotte Brontë's "Jane Eyre" which prefigures Jean Rhys's "Wide Sargasso Sea," it stars Frances Dee as a Canadian nurse who takes a job tending the ambulatory yet mentally dead wife (Christine Gordon) of a West Indian plantation owner (Tom Conway). Lewton's screenwriters, Curt Siodmak and Ardel Wray, knew how to make the occult and psychological converge, and the director, Jacques Tourneur, a master at orchestrating shadowy forms, gave supernatural doings the force of poetic justice.—*M.S.* (Walter Reade Theatre; Aug. 30)

K-19: THE WIDOWMAKER

Nobody knows what happened, but somehow the Kathryn Bigelow who directed "The Loveless" and "Point Break"—hip, stylized, and about as solemn as a surfboard—has grown into someone who makes long, worthy films on such topics as what to do when your nuclear reactor springs a leak. This new picture stars Harrison Ford, who seems to have bitten off more of a Russian accent than he can chew, as the captain of a Soviet submarine. He is seconded, not without rivalry, by Liam Neeson; their looming standoff never quite happens, and the same feels true of the whole tale. Cleaving solidly to its factual basis (the real K-19 was launched in 1961), the film tells thrillingly of a war that didn't break out and a vessel that never sank. The dialogue has a clanging, Cold War rigidity, which may explain why the camera keeps scurrying, as if by way of compensation, through the iron burrows of the sub. No one can deny the cautionary lesson that Bigelow delivers on the perils of radiation, but most people will crave more thrills to go with their nasty spills.—*A.L.* (7/29/02) (Battery Park 16 and 42nd Street E Walk.)

THE KID STAYS IN THE PICTURE

Before Robert Evans was discovered at a Hollywood swimming pool by the aging Norma Shearer, he was a garmento from New York with swarthy good looks and the confidence of a lion. Thrust into pictures in his twenties, Evans quickly became the head of production at Paramount, where he played a significant role in generating such classics as "Rosemary's Baby," "The Godfather," and "Chinatown." The movie is a celebratory narrative of his life, composed of newsreel footage, stills, and haunting shots of Evans's mansion in various states of glory and disrepair. Evans himself narrates in his gravelly voice: his speech is a cross between hardboiled rhetoric and the traditional crass-but-with-heart bullying of Hollywood power types. He comes off as a preposterously likable man, though the movie is so one-sided that you never get the truth of any situation that it touches on.—*D.D.* (Angelika Film Center, BAM Rose Cinemas, Cinema 2, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and 42nd Street E Walk.)

THE LAST KISS
A superb, full-bodied Italian comedy written and directed by Gabriele Muccino. The movie is set in Rome, though it could take place in any large Italian city in which hip, good-looking young people work in a desultory way, cadge off their parents, go to weddings, hang out, and have sex a lot. As the characters long for more love and more freedom, the action is driven forward by a gliding camera that catches everyone in frenetic movement. The actors display prodigious gifts of temperament—that blessed absence of self-consciousness that links Italian opera to Italian comedy and makes so much French, English, and American work seem guarded or skittish by comparison. Muccino has a particular gift for lovers' quarrels, which he lets bloom into hilarious excess. In Italian.—*D.D.* (8/5/02) (Sunshine Cinema.)

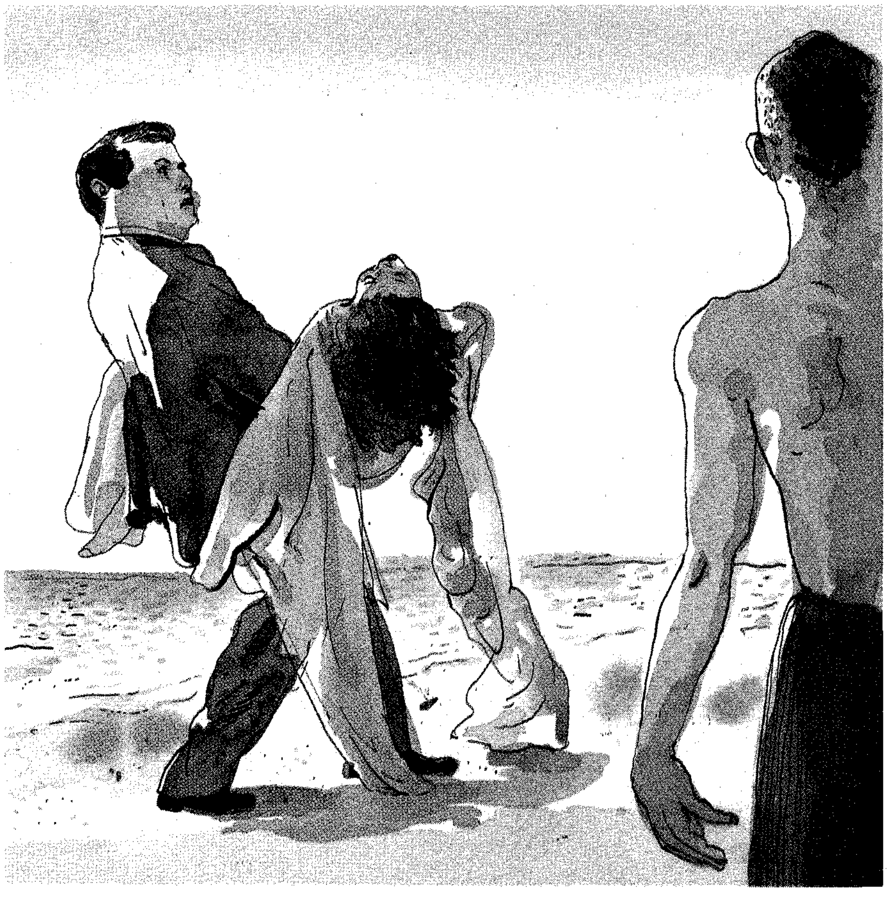
METROPOLIS
Fritz Lang's 1927 pop-visionary epic has always been, from sequence to sequence, a milestone of precision craftsmanship on a gargantuan scale. No director has ever raised so many shivers from choreographing geometric hordes of extras—they move like organic machines or bristling anacondas and leviathans. The inclusion, in the current print, of forty minutes' worth of footage never before seen in America brings some sense to the motivation of Rotwang (Rudolf Klein-Rogge), the unhinged inventor who is creating a mechanical woman. Lost scenes rendered here only with titles also lay out the industrialist Joh Fredersen's search for his rebellious boy, who has become a member of Maria's Christian workers' movement—and her lover. With this subplot, the picture operates as a proto-noir suspense film, as well as a mad-scientist extravaganza and an all-out disaster flick.—*M.S.* (Quad Cinema and Ziegfeld.)

POSSESSION
Neil LaBute's adaptation of A. S. Byatt's novel is disappointingly tepid. Two contemporary literary scholars, a coldly composed British professor (Gwyneth Paltrow) and a scruffy American graduate student (Aaron Eckhart), discover a cache of secret letters exchanged by the great (fictional) Victorian poet Randolph Henry Ash (Jeremy Northam) and an intriguing (fictional) minor poet, Christabel LaMotte (Jennifer Ehle). As the scholars track down evidence of a passionate, illicit love affair between the two poets, they experience their own, neurotic version of love, and LaBute cuts back and forth between past and present. The period re-creation is faultless, and the narrative technique very smooth, but the movie never works up much fire. Eckhart gives his best movie performance yet, but you know a film is in trouble when it seems like a frigid version of "The French Lieutenant's Woman."—*D.D.* (BAM Rose Cinemas, Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

ROAD TO PERDITION
A solemnly beautiful art concept—which is not quite the same thing as a great movie. The talented English director Sam Mendes ("American Beauty"), along with his collaborators, the cinematographer Conrad L. Hall and the veteran costume designer Albert Wolsky, draw their visual ideas and moods from old movies and comic books, distilling the memory of crime fiction—rather than the memory of crime—into imagery that could not be more iconic. Tom Hanks plays a Depression-era Mob assassin, a family man with a small moustache and a stiff walk. He moves through a stylized world of fedoras, long dark coats, and thick-woven suits; there's also lots of rain coming straight down the way it did in noir movies of the forties and fifties. Visually, the picture is all of a piece, but it's a self-conscious work—all dark-toned academic classicism.—*D.D.* (7/15/02) (Battery Park 16, First & 62nd Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

THE SEVEN SAMURAI
Seven hired knights defend a village against forty mounted bandits—their pay a few handfuls of rice. This 1954 three-and-a-half-hour epic on violence and action—Akira Kurosawa's masterpiece—has been widely imitated, but no one has come near it. In Japanese.—*P.K.* (Film Forum; starting Aug. 30.)

SIGNS
A third attempt, on the part of M. Night Shyamalan, to disturb our sleep. This time we are in rural Pennsylvania, home to Graham Hess (Mel Gibson), who used to be a minister and is now a farmer; the story is designed to make him wonder if that was such a smart move. First come the crop circles, then glimpses of green men vanishing into the corn. Hess is skeptical, but his brother (Joaquin Phoenix) and children (Abigail Breslin and Rory Culkin) are more seriously spooked, and with good cause; soon enough, it becomes clear that aliens have landed all over the world in search of human beings and other comforting snacks. Shyamalan takes it easy on the special effects; much of the movie, which skirts dangerously close to the uneventful in its need to draw out the suspense, consists merely of the family sitting around watching TV or waiting for a claw under the door. The ending is far too freighted with spiritual intent, yet, as with "The Sixth Sense," you can neither ignore nor forget the mist of sickly unease, streaked with black humor, that rises out of the plot.—*A.L.* (8/12/02) (Astor Plaza, Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Cinema 1, East 86th Street Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Olympia I and II, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)



The 1943 horror classic "I Walked with a Zombie," at the Walter Reade Theatre.

BARRY BLITT

TADPOLE
A short but annoying film from Gary Winick, who brings us the astonishing news that teen-age boys want to make out with women three times their age. Oscar (Aaron Stanford) is fifteen, half-French, and wholly unappealing; nevertheless, he goes to bed with a chiropractor (Bebe Neuwirth) and hungers after his own stepmother (Sigourney Weaver), who vaguely returns the compliment. Some of the scenes, involving Oscar the hapless patsy rather than Oscar the hopeful swain, are smartly managed; others, like an overcooked sequence at Café Boulud, prove harder to stomach. The movie was shot on digital video, which means that most viewers will reach for their spectacles before realizing that the fuzz is not their fault. Only Bebe Neuwirth fans, a discerning crowd, will have a ball. She has never been so mean or, as a result, so hot to the touch.—*A.L.* (7/29/02) (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Eastside Playhouse, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Sunshine Cinema.)

24 HOUR PARTY PEOPLE
Tony Wilson, the Manchester music impresario who founded Factory records in the late seventies—home to Joy Division (later New Order) and Happy Mondays, among others—gets a fevered tribute in Michael Winterbottom's blast of a film. Wilson is played with a brilliant élan by British comic Steve Coogan—a standout performance that captures the dour enthusiasm of Wilson's genius. And Winterbottom's casting of the myriad musician roles is flawless; there isn't a hair style or a body type that seems out of place. The film's direction has the jittery anarchic feel of a good punk song, and the script displays a fast and free humor that indulges in the excesses of a rock-and-roll life.—*B.D.* (Lincoln Square and Sunshine Cinema.)

XXX
A slovenly rip-off of the James Bond formula, with Vin Diesel as Xander Cage, an extreme-sports athlete who is recruited into intelligence work. Diesel wears tattoos rather than a tuxedo, and eschews shaken-not-stirred alcoholic beverages. He's also rather less interested in sex than Bond. The movie's real draw is its explosions, which spread flames like ketchup across the easily ignited sets. With Martin Csokas caressing his swinish lines as a supervillain and Asia Argento as a witch-eyed shady lady. The movie was not directed; it was launched (by Rob Cohen), in the familiar corporate-schlock style of recent blockbusters, and there are long sequences in which the shots barely hang together.—*D.D.* (8/19 & 26/02) (Battery Park 16, 84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, 19th Street East 6, Olympia I and II, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

ALSO PLAYING

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
Film Forum.

BLUE CRUSH
Battery Park 16, Chelsea West, First & 62nd Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.

THE FAST RUNNER (ATANARJUAT)
59th Street East Cinemas and Sunshine Cinema.

HOW I KILLED MY FATHER
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Sunshine Cinema.

LOVELY & AMAZING
East 85th Street, Empire 25, Sutton 1 and 2, and Village East Cinemas.

ONE HOUR PHOTO
Lincoln Square and Union Square.

SIMONE
Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.

SUNSHINE STATE (7/8/02)
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Union Square.

UNDISPUTED
Battery Park 16, 84th Street Sixplex, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Orpheum VII, Sutton 1 and 2, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

Unless noted, call 777-FILM for show times.

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
BAM Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn.
Battery Park 16, West St. at Vesey St.
Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinemas 1, 2, and 3, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St. (924-3363).
East 86th Street Cinemas, Third Ave. at 86th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
Empire 25, on 42nd St. near Eighth Ave. (398-3939).
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
42nd Street E Walk, 42nd St. near Eighth Ave.
Kips Bay Theatre, Second Ave. at 32nd St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St. (757-2280).
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
Metro Twin, Broadway at 99th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Paris, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.
Pioneer, 155 E. 3rd St. (254-3300).
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
Sunshine Cinema, 139-143 E. Houston St.
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34th Street Theatre, 312 W. 34th St.
Union Square, Broadway at 13th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE
35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—Through Sept. 8: "Carnal Knowledge: The Sexual Revolution on Film, 1967-1972." Aug. 31 at 2: "Hi, Mom!" (1970, Brian De Palma). ♦ Aug. 31 at 4: "Is There Sex After Death?" (1971, Alan and Jeanne Abel). ♦ Sept. 1 at 2: "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex* (*But Were Afraid to Ask)" (†). ♦ Sept. 1 at 4: "Fritz the Cat" (1972, Ralph Bakshi). ♦ Repertory nights. Aug. 31-Sept. 1 at 6:30: "Salò; or the 120 Days of Sodom" (1975, Pier Paolo Pasolini; in Italian).

BAM ROSE CINEMAS
30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-777-3456)—Aug. 28 at 6:50 and 9:30: "Let's Get Lost" (1989, Bruce Weber). ♦ Through Sept. 3: "Catch a Fire: Caribbean Films." Aug. 29 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Caribbean in Paris" (2000, Pascal Légitimus; in French). ♦ Aug. 30 at 2, 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Papa's Song" (1999, Sander Francken; in Dutch and Papamientu). ♦ Aug. 31 at 3:30, 6:30, and 9:40: "The Harder They Come" (1972, Perry Henzell). The 6:30 screening will be followed by an interview with the director. ♦ Sept. 1 at 2, 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Life and Debt" (2001, Stephanie Black). ♦ Sept. 2 at 2, 5:20, and 9:10: "Ava and Gabriel: A Love Story" (1990, Felix de Rooy; in Dutch and Papamientu). ♦ Sept. 2 at 4 and 7:30: "The Last Rumba of Papa Montero" (1992, Octavio Cortazar; in Spanish). ♦ Sept. 3 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Looking for Life" (1999, Claudette Coulanges; in Creole and French).

FILM FORUM
W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—Through Sept. 12: "Kurosawa & Mifune," a retrospective of the director-actor team. Aug. 28-29 at 1:10, 3:10, 5:30, 7:30, and 9:30: "Sanjuro" (1962). ♦ Starting Aug. 30 at 1, 4:40, and 8:20: "The Seven Samurai" (†).

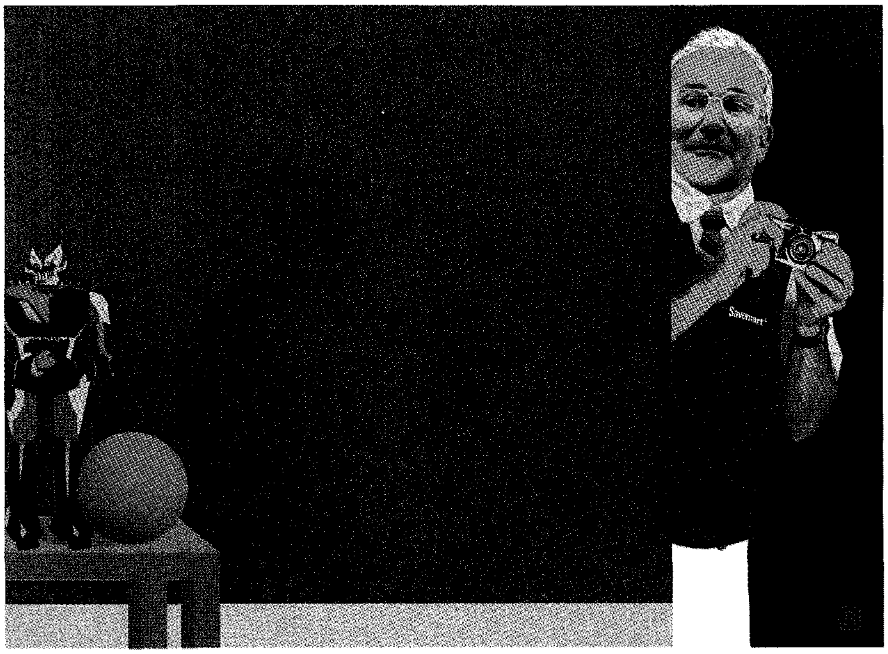
FLORENCE GOULD HALL
55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—Through Dec. 17: "Neo-Noir: Another Shade of Darkness." Sept. 3 at 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, and 9: "Purple Noon" (1960, René Clément; in French).

SOCRATES SCULPTURE PARK
Broadway at Vernon Blvd., Long Island City (718-956-1819)—Free outdoor movies, starting at dusk. Aug. 28: "The Color of Paradise" (1999, Majid Majidi; in Farsi).

SUNSHINE CINEMA
139-143 E. Houston St. (358-0573)—Midnight movies. Aug. 30-Sept. 1: "The Princess Bride" (1987, Rob Reiner).

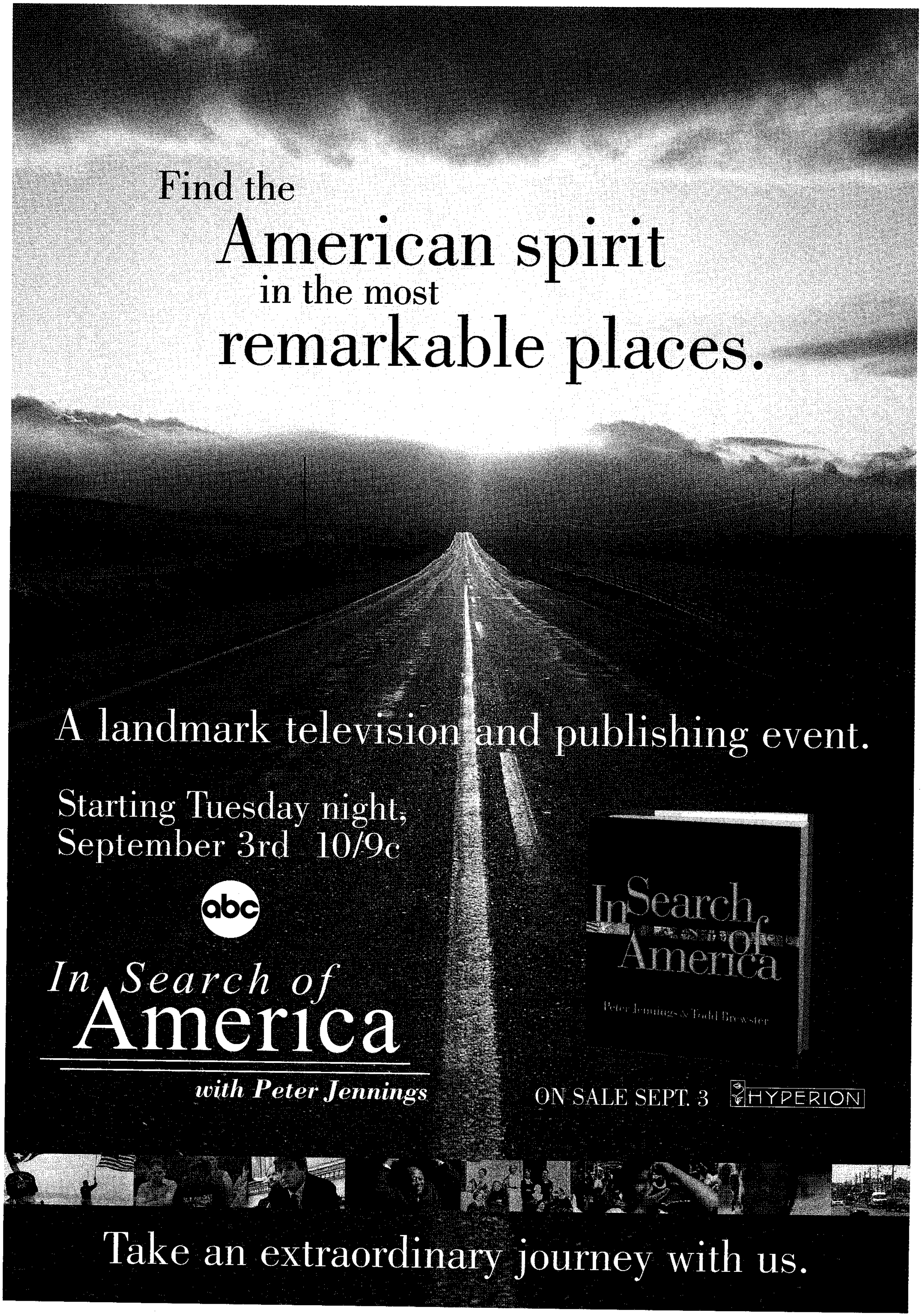
THALIA THEATRE
2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (864-5400)—Through Sept. 8: "Classic Thalia: A Tribute to Martin and Ursula Lewis." Aug. 28 at 8:45: "Gabbeh" (1997, Mohsen Makhamalbaf; in Farsi). ♦ Aug. 29 at 7: "Woman in the Dunes" (1964, Hiroshi Teshigahara; in Japanese). ♦ Aug. 29 at 9:15: "Tokyo Story" (1953, Yasujiro Ozu; in Japanese). ♦ Aug. 30 at 7: "Beau Travail" (1999, Claire Denis; in French). ♦ Aug. 30 at 8:45: "I Can't Sleep" (†). ♦ Aug. 31 at 2 and 7: "Institute Benjamenta" (1996, Stephen and Timothy Quay). ♦ Aug. 31 at 4 and 9: Animated shorts by the Brothers Quay. ♦ Sept. 1 at 3 and 7: "A Hard Day's Night" (1964, Richard Lester). ♦ Sept. 1 at 4:45 and 8:45: "Gimme Shelter" (1970, Albert and David Maysles). ♦ Sept. 3 at 7: "The Wonderful, Horrible Life of Leni Riefenstahl" (1993, Ray Müller; in German).

WALTER READE THEATRE
Lincoln Center (875-5600)—Through Sept. 12: "Whispers in a Distant Corridor: The Cinema of Jacques Tourneur." Aug. 30 at 1, 4:30, and 8 and Sept. 3 at 1: "Curse of the Demon" (1957). ♦ Aug. 30 at 3, 6:30, and 10: "I Walked with a Zombie" (†). ♦ Aug. 31 at 1, 4:15, and 7:30 and Sept. 3 at 9: "The Leopard Man" (1943). ♦ Aug. 31 at 2:30, 5:45, and 9: "Cat People" (†). ♦ Sept. 1 at 1, 5, and 9 and Sept. 2 at 3 and 7: "Out of the Past" (1947). ♦ Sept. 1 at 3:10 and 7:10 and Sept. 2 at 1, 5:10, and 9:10: "Nightfall" (1956).



Robin Williams stars in the thriller "One Hour Photo."

JOHN RITTER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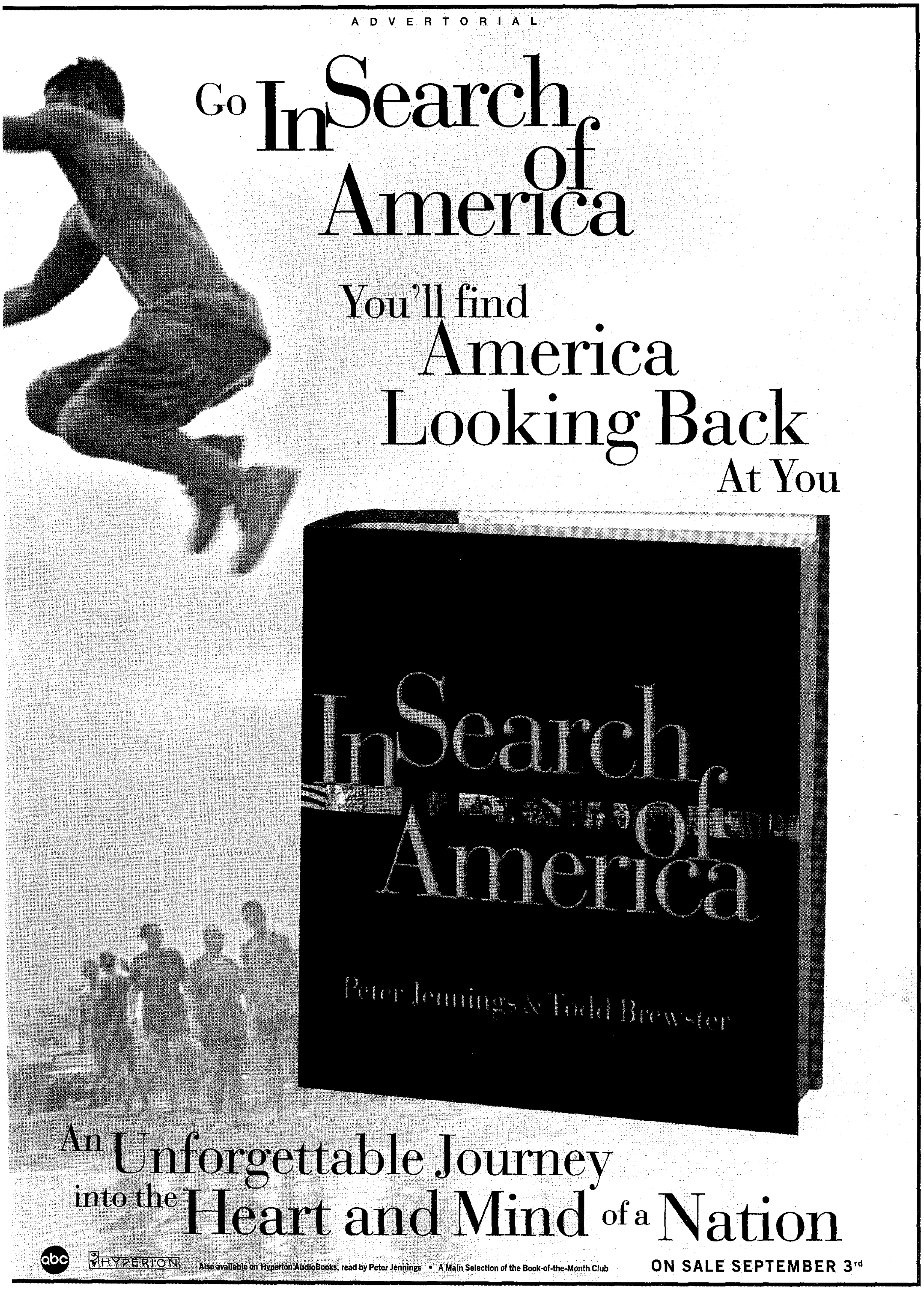
You can hear it in the arguments before a South Carolina county school board meeting, considering the line between church and state, as the community it serves initiates a campaign to build a more "moral" society; and in the chatter of political activists in Washington using the debate over a president's plan for tax relief to make their case for the appropriate balance of power between the federal government and the states, between *any government* and the "sacred" individual. You can detect it in the corridors of a multinational corporation as it conceives a marketing plan to sell the American potato chip—and with it, the gospel of the free market—to the underdeveloped world; and you can watch it in the staging of an American musical—that quintessentially American art form—as presented by Colorado high school students who find in its lyrics and melodies the expression of a still idealistic people, embracing freedom, equality, and democracy.

We conceived of this project as a journey, and you will note that it is laid out that way. We did so in part as a method of organizing the material and demonstrating its scope, but also because of the resonance we felt it provided with our topic. One of the beauties of the American story is that it is itself a journey, that the founders conceived it to be one, and that the ideals they set forth were just that—ideals—perhaps unattainable, but worthy goals for a nation of strivers. America, as the founders imagined it, was to be a nation in perpetual process, always in the act of becoming, often falling short of its own ambitions for itself, yet always ready to assume them. We set out to be just, but do not always respect freedoms; we revere democracy, but we are sometimes undemocratic. America's fundamental tenets have been distorted to serve evil purposes, as in the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, and they have been used against us: only in a free society could men with sinister aims, like those responsible for the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, move about at will, preparing their attack. Over the years, America's principles have been shaken, molded, adapted, assaulted, but remarkably, they endure.

Photo credit: Brian E. Harkin

A D V E R T O R I A L



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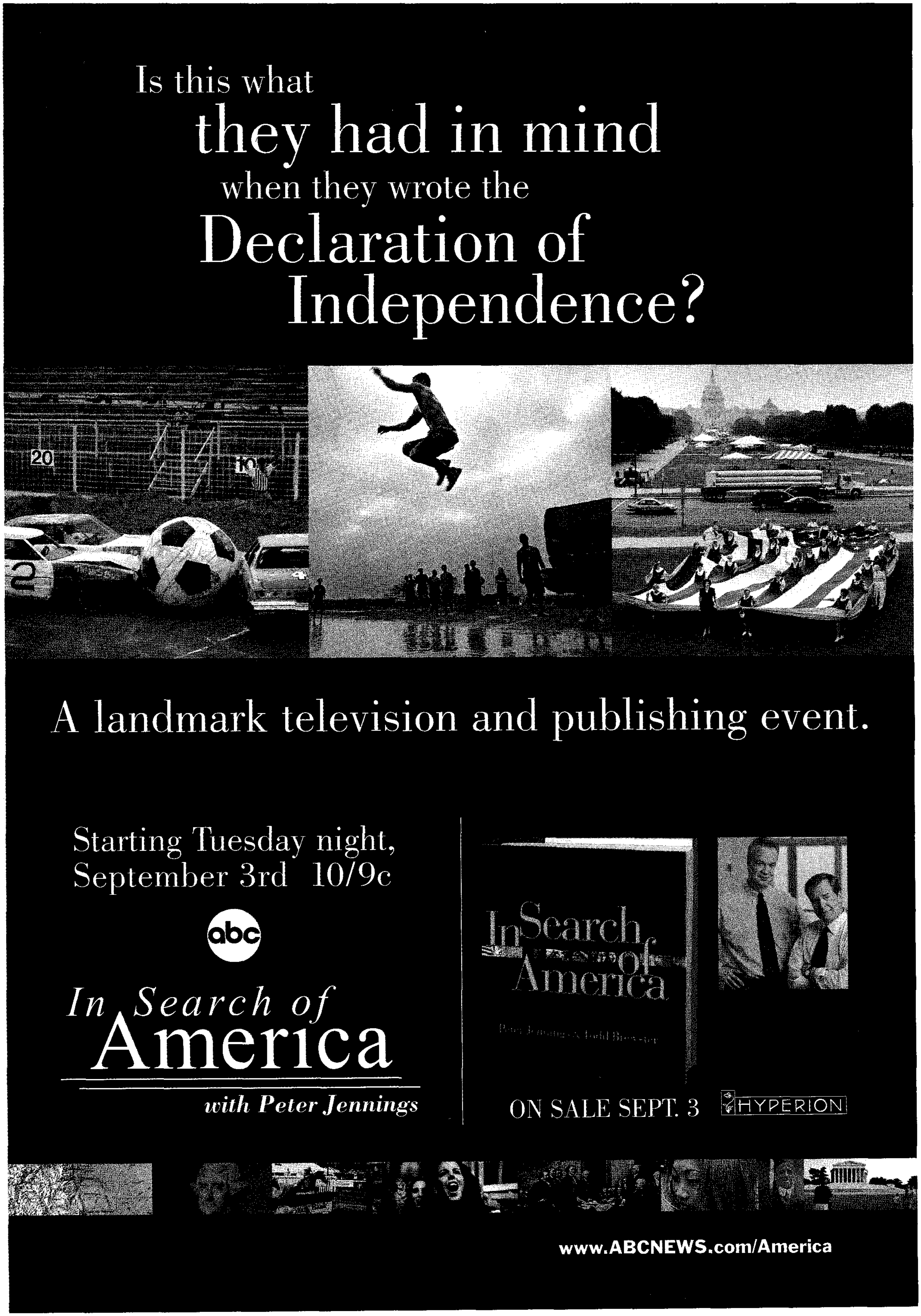

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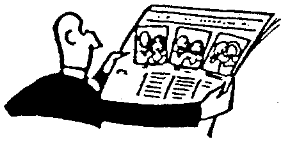
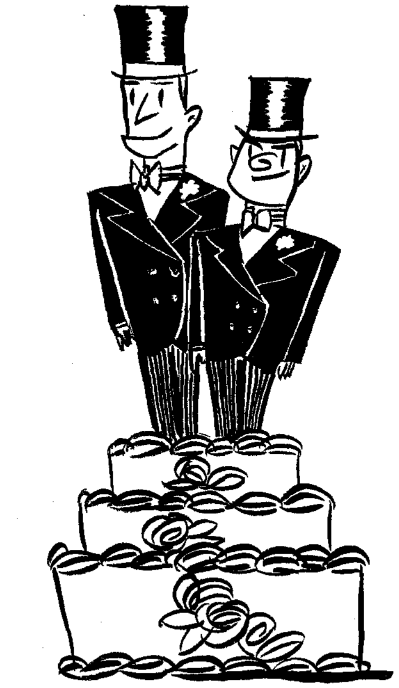
COMMENT
GAY OLD TIMES



When the *Times* announced, this month, that its Sunday Weddings pages are to shed their staid, heterosexual identity and come out, transformed, as the Weddings/Celebrations pages, sparkling with accounts of the quasi-nuptials of gay and lesbian couples, it was rightly understood to be a matter of some moment. The *Times'* wedding pages, as has often been remarked, serve as an unofficial cultural index: once chronicling only the inbreeding of the Wasp aristocracy—noting the happy couple's lineage, club memberships, charity affiliations, and couturier—the pages have increasingly come to cover the weddings of formerly overlooked demographics, like Jews and blacks, sometimes even showing them marrying each other. Inviting gay couples to the party must have seemed, to the *Times,* inevitable, and, while the newspaper is doubtless motivated by the lofty goal of inclusion, its editors surely hope that some of their new celebrants' party-throwing skills will contribute to the entertainment value of the page.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

Though little noted at the time, the really significant change in the *Times* wedding pages took place a couple of years ago, on February 13, 2000. It was on this eve of Valentine's Day that the newspaper started running wedding announcements that included not only each marital merger's raw data—academic achievements, parental occupations, name of officiant—but, in some cases, an account of the couple's path to matrimony. Thus readers learned that Pamela Carrington, a retail executive, and Harry T. Edwards, a federal appeals-court judge, first struck up a conversation while in a holding pattern over LaGuardia Airport, and that romance bloomed in spite of the fact that, as the bride told the *Times,* "he had no idea what Barneys was!" The paper also reported that day that Willa Jane Bernstein, an assistant New York state attorney general, and Daniel William Braz, a Merrill Lynch investment banker, met at a singles' dinner-dance at the New York Athletic Club, and that within a few months Mr. Braz had devised a computer program for Ms. Bernstein, "with rows and columns labeled Baby 1, Baby 2, Private School, and so forth." ("That freaked me out a little bit, but it was also alluring," she recalled.) Modelled on the popular "Vows" column, which has, each week since 1992, taken a particularly felicitous coupling and turned it into a soft-news story, these wedding announcements were courtship narratives in miniature, each, like a Jane Austen novel, ending at the moment when married life begins.



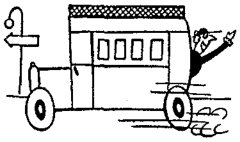
The wedding announcement as love story is of a piece with the popular understanding that marriage is primarily a romance rather than, as has historically been the case, a pragmatic contractual arrangement sanctioned by a larger community. This is no surprise, since those earlier characteristics of marriage have been largely stripped away. There's no prohibition on cohabitation these days, and religious regulation of marriage has dwindled into benign ceremonial irrelevance. Nor is marriage considered to be the only environment in which children can healthfully be raised, Mr. Braz's spreadsheets notwithstanding; the wedding pages regularly celebrate nuptials in which the offspring of bride or groom—or of bride *and* groom—serve as ring bearers or flower girls. Even the inclusion in a wedding announcement of the parents of the bride and groom is vestigial: weddings are no longer about cementing the alliance between Darline and Evandro Braz of Chappaqua and Doris and William Bernstein of New York but about fêting the unique union, and merengue-dancing skills, of Willa and Daniel.

Given that wedding announcements are now not so much accounts of upheld tradition as celebrations of individualism, the inclusion of gay weddings makes perfect sense. In fact, gay marriage is the ultimate celebration of individualism, since it heralds a union that fulfills none of matrimony's traditional functions. Though gay couples do find religious officiants to perform their ceremonies, it takes a certain kind of minister or rabbi to see past the Biblical catalogue of abominations on which his or her colleagues of the cloth may stick. Gay weddings do not celebrate the merging of bloodlines and the consolidation of dynastic power (though they may celebrate the consolidation of individual power—that being, as David Brooks observed in "Bobos in Paradise," one of the functions of the wedding pages in an era when a cognitive élite has trumped the hereditary one). And while many same-sex unions include the rearing of children, even the most dedicated gay parents are unlikely to argue that their reason for marrying is to save their children from the shame of illegitimacy.

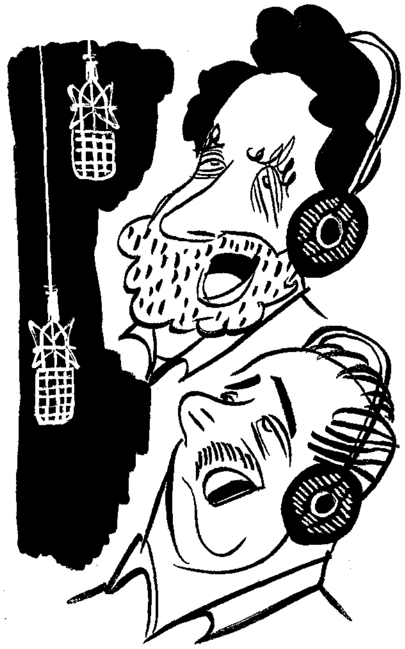
Gay marriage itself is something of a misnomer, a fact acknowledged by the *Times* in its willingness to open the wedding pages not only to gay couples who enter a legally recognized civil union in Vermont (the only state that offers such an opportunity) or who register under the domestic-partnership laws of New York or other states but also to those who merely "celebrate their commitment in a public ceremony"—that is, who participate in the form of a wedding without the content of legal wedlock. A gay wedding is all love story; as such, it merits just as many intimate column inches as the Braz-Bernstein nuptials—maybe even more. The *Times'* same-sex wedding announcements will be the supreme expression of the contemporary ideal of marriage as a grand, individualistic romance detached from society's strictures—the ideal to which contemporary Americans are wedded, for better or for worse.

—*Rebecca Mead*

ON THE AIR
DRIVE SMALL



In an unusual spurt of semi-seriousness, Tom and Ray Magliozzi (a.k.a. Click and Clack), the wisecracking brothers and M.I.T.-educated auto mechanics who are the hosts of the radio show "Car Talk," decided recently to launch a political crusade of sorts, against sport-utility vehicles. "Car Talk," which airs on National Public Radio but is owned and produced by the Magliozzis, provides an impressive pulpit. It is the most popular entertainment show on public radio, heard, on average, by 3.7 million listeners around the country each weekend. "We're hoping to have an effect on the market," one of the brothers (it was impossible to distinguish which) said over the phone last week, in a rare tandem interview. They both guffawed, as they often do. "We have no effect on anything," the other said.



Click and Clack

To amplify their message, the Magliozzis teamed up with Stonyfield Farm yogurt, an environmentally active "acidophilus conglomerate" (as they put it, in their thick Boston accents). Together, the two brothers and the yogurt people came up with a suitably nonconfrontational motto, "Live Larger, Drive Smaller," which was to appear on bumper stickers and on Stonyfield yogurt-container lids. There was a problem, however: along with "Car Talk," the lids cited NPR, leaving the impression that the ostensibly politically neutral news organization was involved in a controversial advocacy campaign.

Jenny Lawhorn, an NPR spokeswoman, says that when "Car Talk" proposed the idea she didn't see any problem. "At first, I said, 'Oh, that sounds interesting.' " Stonyfield went ahead and printed up 3.1 million anti-S.U.V. yogurt lids. "But then our legal department said, 'You have to cease printing!' The 'Car Talk' guys can do whatever the heck they want—they have editorial control over their show. But using NPR's name isn't something they're free to do.' It's ironic that this whole environmental thing ends up producing several million useless plastic yogurt lids." (Gary Hirshberg, the C.E.O. of Stonyfield, promised that he'd recycle the lids, into "toothbrushes and bird feeders." The Magliozzis, for their part, announced a competition among listeners to devise an alternative use for the lids. Early suggestions included plugging the hole in the ozone layer and stringing up a beaded curtain on the Lincoln Memorial.) At any rate, neither Hirshberg nor the Magliozzis seemed all that surprised by NPR's decision. "NPR is dependent on Congress's good will, in particular the good will of congressmen living in Detroit," Hirshberg says.

"NPR tries to distance itself from us every chance it gets!" Tom Magliozzi (or was it Ray?) said, laughing. "It obviously has a journalistic position to uphold, and we don't. What do we care? Everyone hates us, anyway. We have alienated ourselves from every group—and you don't even have to be a group anymore."

"Our wives and kids hate us, too!" Ray said. He compared S.U.V.s to acne. "It's like having a zit. When you get that first one, you don't rush out and buy the medicine. But when you see twenty of them on your kisser you say it's time for something to be done."

"Everyone knows that S.U.V.s are big, they block everyone's view, they get five miles to the gallon, they roll over and kill people, and when you get hit by one the bumper comes right in your window and takes your head off," Tom said.

"He's exaggerating, obviously," Ray said.

"I am a little, but not completely. It's a strange madness of crowds—a combination of a lot of things. One is the issue of little people wanting to be big. Little people have been little all their lives, and now they have an opportunity to sit two feet higher than anyone else. What a deal! For a mere thirty-five thousand bucks, you can now be tall! A guy who is five-four will risk a pair of trousers every time he gets into one of these S.U.V.s, just to drive a Lincoln Navigator. I mean, I went into a movie theatre the other day and made the mistake of saying yes when the guy behind the counter said, 'You want the large soda?' This guy gave me—it must have been two gallons."

"It had wheels on it."

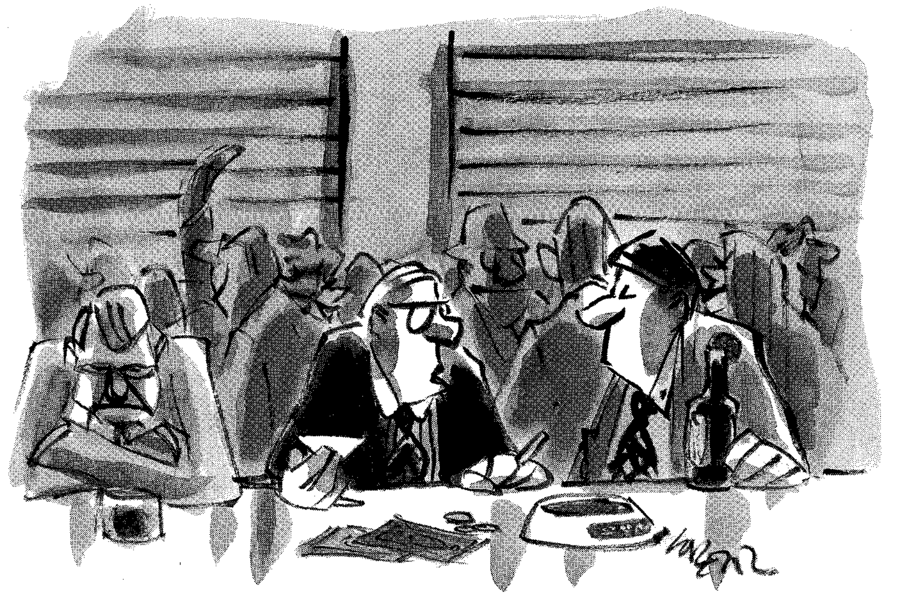
"Two gallons of Coca-Cola! I mean, I was peeing all night!"

"Well, the good thing is that when you're done you got the thing to pee into!" Much laughter.

It turns out that the Magliozzis are not especially fond of other types of automobiles, either. "I *do not* own a car," Tom said. "I either ride a bicycle or use public transportation."

"And believe me," Ray said. "Our fellow Massachusetts motorists are elated."

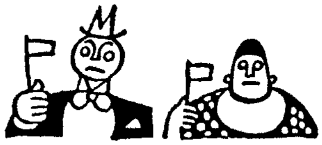
—*Jane Mayer*



"I just heard from my wife's lawyer—they're calling for a regime change."

• •

INTANGIBLES DEPT.
A NO. 1 FAN



One afternoon last week, on Court 8 at the National Tennis Center, in Flushing Meadows, two young players named Bob Bryan, from California, and Tuomas Ketola, from Finland, met in a first-round qualifying match for the U.S. Open. Among those gathered to watch was Lou Noritz, a retired Manhattan postal worker who has spent the past eight years following the professional tennis tour around the world, and who is widely acknowledged to be its most dedicated groupie. Noritz, a compact man with a salt-and-pepper beard and a megaphonic voice, customarily wears a jockstrap around his neck (signifying his support of athletics) and a laminated badge identifying him as the "A.T.P. Psychologist" (players call him Dr. Lou). His shirt pocket held a black Magic Marker that he uses to sign autographs. "I'm a celebrity here," he said, with a slight note of resignation. Some time later, a tennis fan from Australia approached. "Are you Lou? Could I get a picture with you?"

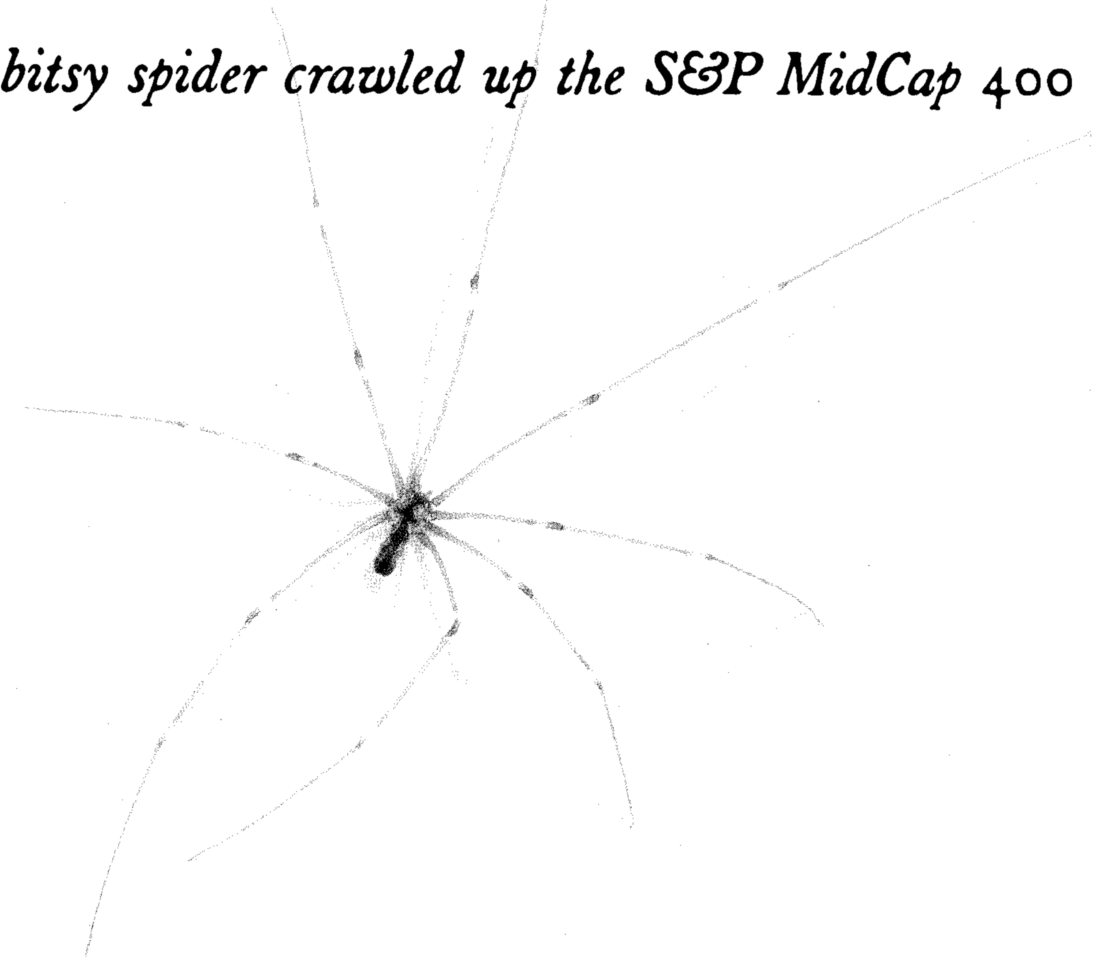
Noritz, who is fifty-seven, tends to be an exuberantly partisan spectator. Having decided in advance to back Bryan, he switched sides every time Bryan did. Whenever Bryan stroked a winner, Noritz hollered, "Big shot!" ("I never say, 'Good shot.' 'Good' is so trite; it has no impact on a player's mind. There is a science to this.") Whenever Bryan won a game, Noritz jumped to his feet, held aloft a large American flag—he is keen on patriotic appeals and carries several dozen national flags to tournaments—and shouted, "U.S.A.!" At critical junctures, he urged Bryan on with a solemn pledge: "End it, I'll wave it."

Noritz's goals are straightforward. "I want to affect matches and befriend the players," he said. "I will confess that I also have an ego and want to be recognized." He believes that his support can spell the difference between victory and defeat: "I estimate that I'm good for five points a set. I'm a factor." Occasionally, that awareness leads him astray. At a tournament in Newport last month, he ran onto the court to celebrate a protégé's triumph, and tackled him in the process; this earned Noritz a one-day banishment.

Noritz, who shares an apartment in Brighton Beach with three chinchillas, four hamsters, seven guinea pigs, fifteen birds, two iguanas, a pair of rabbits, a turtle, a terrier, and a tankful of tropical fish, is a man happily governed by his obsessions, most of which involve athletics. He worked the graveyard shift at the General Post Office, in order to leave his afternoons and evenings free for sports. For many years, he was a standout pitcher in several Brooklyn softball leagues; by his own tally, he amassed a record of 1,422–780 in twenty-three seasons. Noritz has never played tennis, but he has been hooked on the game since the seventies. His annual itinerary includes all four grand-slam championships and fourteen other tournaments. A substantial inheritance funds his travels. "My mother was frugal," he said. "She left me quite a bit of money."

Establishing credibility on the pro tour was, he concedes, a struggle. His breakthrough came in 1996, while he was watching Pete Sampras play in Cincinnati. After winning a particularly arduous point, Sampras reached into the stands and high-fived Noritz, who was in the front row. Whether Sampras knew him or simply slapped the nearest available hand is a question Noritz prefers not to entertain. At any rate, a photographer happened to catch the moment on film and gave the picture to Noritz. It was, as they say, money in the bank: he made a hundred copies and handed them out to

The itsy-bitsy spider crawled up the S&P MidCap 400



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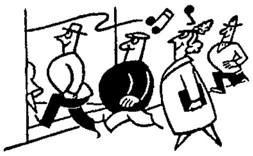
Reached by phone last week, Justin Gimelstob, a tour veteran, spoke fondly of Noritz. "Lou knows a lot more about tennis than people might think," Gimelstob said. "A lot of times when I'm playing, he will say things that are very appropriate to the situation, and I'll think, Gee whiz, that was perceptive."

Noritz has a complicated relationship with Lleyton Hewitt, from Australia, the defending U.S. Open champion. He sees Hewitt as a kindred spirit (scrappy, tenacious) and gets along well with Hewitt's entourage. In fact, he sat in Hewitt's box during last year's U.S. Open final and also attended the victory party, at Bice, in Manhattan, where he shared a table with Hewitt and his girlfriend, the Belgian player Kim Clijsters. "I ordered filet mignon and all the champagne I could get," Noritz said.

Nevertheless, Hewitt has been unable to regain the No. 1 spot on Noritz's top-fifty list; he held that distinction in the late nineties but was demoted in 2000 for being stingy with autographs, and is currently ranked second. (The rankings, which are updated every four months and distributed to players, are based on performance and attitude; attitude is measured by, among other things, willingness to supply Noritz with tournament passes, including all-important entrée to the players' lounges.) The fact that his recent success on the court has not improved his standing evidently rankles Hewitt, who raised the matter at the French Open, in May. Noritz says that he was blunt with Hewitt, telling him that he was still insufficiently obliging of fans. Hewitt appeared to take the rebuke to heart. "Lleyton can't get mad at me," Noritz said. "He knows it's tough love."

—*Michael Steinberger*

OLDIES DEPT.
SONIC TRUTH



Another good thing about New York is that an ancient-music musician looking for an ancient room in which to play his or her original ancient instrument might not have to leave town. An ancient-music musician can find a fairly ancient room—and, in this case, "ancient" is defined as "a lot older than the United States of America"—in the Turtle Bay section of Manhattan.

This news was a relief to Christine Matovich, the producer of Parthenia, the much-praised consort of viols, which was searching recently for an acoustically appropriate place to record a CD of seventeenth-century viol music. Matovich and her recording engineer, Mark Christensen, had looked everywhere: at St. Agnes Church, across from Grand Central Terminal, which seemed like a good candidate, until they were told that the priests there go to bed early and might not abide late-night viol-playing; and then at Grace Church, in the East Village, which is also very old-sounding, except for the sound of what runs beneath it—the not-so-old subway. But when they arrived at a reception for Parthenia at the East Forty-ninth Street home of the artist David Deutsch, they were immediately blown away: (1) by the room—it is twenty feet wide and fifty feet long, with two fireplaces, thick walls, and a stunning, high seventeenth-century wooden ceiling, which was imported, Latin inscriptions, stained glass, and all, from Italy—and (2) by the room's acoustics.

"I love the sound of this room," Matovich said, as Parthenia began setting up the other day.

"The room is fantastic," Lawrence Lipnik said. Lipnik plays the tenor viol. The other members of Parthenia are Beverly Au, on bass viol; Rosamund Morley, on treble viol; and Lisa Terry, also on bass viol. The viol, by the way, is a six-stringed contraption that looks a little like a cross between a violin and a guitar.

Deutsch was away in the country while Parthenia occupied his town house, but he gave a tour of it over the phone. It was originally owned by Charlotte Hunnewell Martin, who, around 1920, bought all the houses on the block, renovated them, designed a communal garden, and sold the buildings to a group of neighbors that eventually included Maxwell Perkins, Learned Hand, Katharine Hepburn, Stephen Sondheim, Henry Luce, and E. B. White. Deutsch believes that Mrs. Martin found the wooden ceiling somewhere outside Florence. Deutsch likes to have musicians over from time to time, and even sound engineers, who, when they hear the room, are in heaven. "Wood sort of absorbs and reflects sound in proportions that the human ear likes to hear," Christensen said.

When the recording session was about to begin, all the windows were closed, to keep out typical modern New York sounds. This made the room very hot. The consort members sat sweating, in shorts and T-shirts, and strained to keep the gut strings of their viols in tune. Matovich fetched ice water and asked the two or three visitors who were there not to speak. The musicians rehearsed a short piece written in 1627 by Carlo Farina, who was said to be the son of a viol player from Mantua, Italy.

Gary Wedow, the chorus master of City Opera, arrived to serve as *Tonmeister*. He put on headphones and sat beside Christensen with a pencil and the Farina score. "I love the room," Wedow said. "Farina, take one."

A sound, a beautiful sound, filled the room like incense. At one point, Wedow stopped the musicians. "Uh, you want to do that again," he said. They repeated three measures. "Uh, you want to do that again."

Rosamund Morley said, "Should we wait? There's an airplane." When the phone rang, Matovich said, "It will ring five times."

Finally, after two hours of playing and retuning and playing, they finished the Farina and looked over at Wedow, who gave them a thumbs-up.

"At the time this music was made, music was considered a science," Lipnik said afterward. "And if you played the music in a room designed according to the same scientific and mathematical principles, then the building would—"

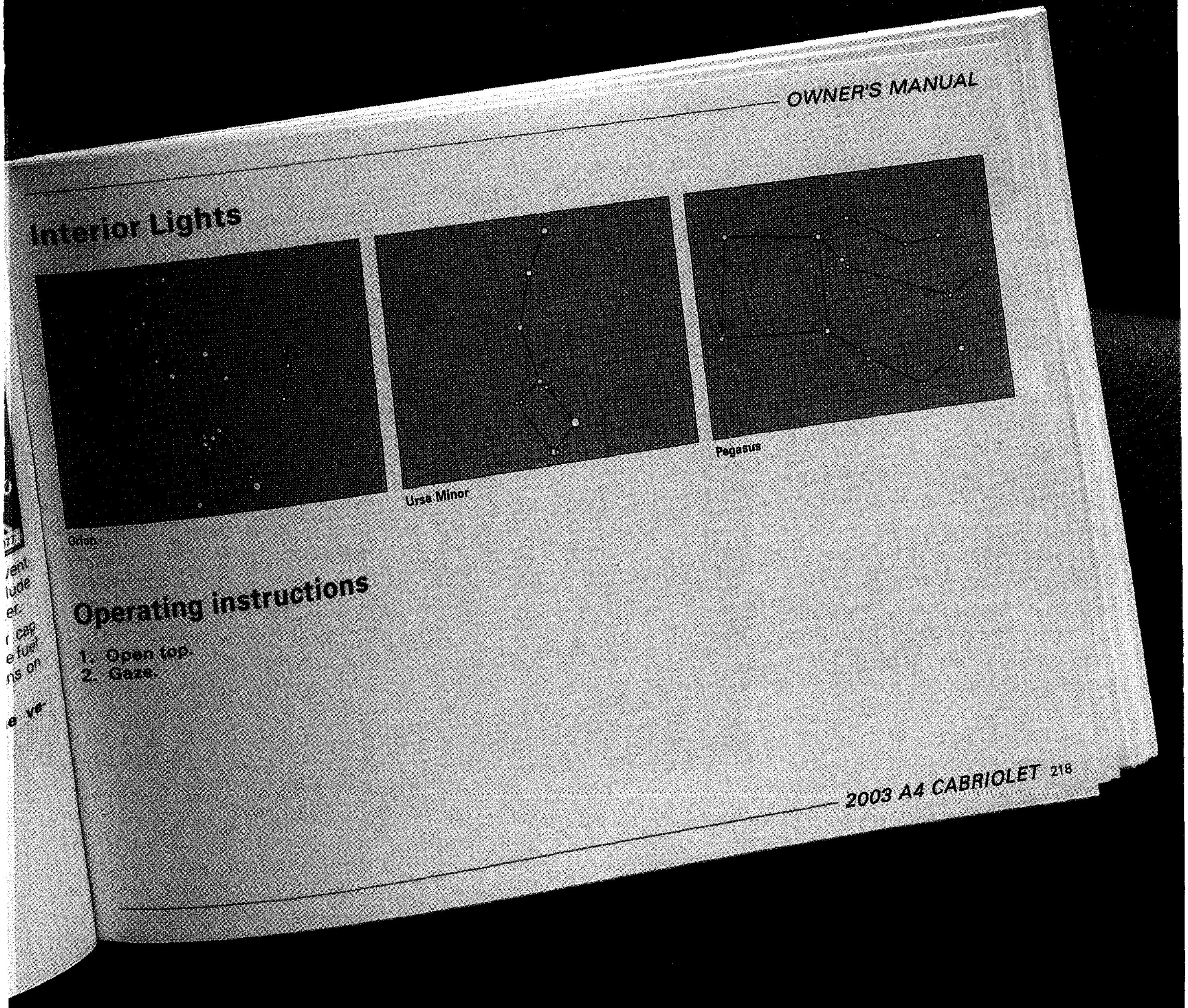
"The building would resonate appropriately," Wedow interjected.

"There was music that was written with specific buildings in mind, like the Duomo. Dufay's 'Nuper—' "

" 'Nuper Rosarum Flores.' "

"Yes, at least that's the theory," Lipnik said. He and Wedow looked up at the old Italian ceiling and smiled, and Lipnik said, "Maybe this same music was played under this very ceiling."

—*Robert Sullivan*



OWNER'S MANUAL

Interior Lights

Orion

Ursa Minor

Pegasus

Operating instructions

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2. Gaze.

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THE FINANCIAL PAGE

BUSH'S BUDDY ECONOMY

When George W. Bush took office, his Administration loudly touted its corporate credentials. In place of Clinton's policy wonks, the Bush economic team featured real businessmen, who knew how the world worked, and who appreciated, in a visceral and practical way, the value of free markets. Bush had more former C.E.O.s in his Cabinet than any previous President. His Vice-President was a former C.E.O., and Bush himself had run an oil company. "No president, administration, and Cabinet has been as marinated in capitalism," observed *USA Today*, which also praised the Administration's "deep management pool" and its "all-star boardroom."

Now, though, the consensus seems to be that Bush's boardroom is filled with benchwarmers, not all-stars. The Administration has been lambasted, from the left and the right, for its lack of political dexterity, as evidenced by the performance it gave a few weeks ago at the Economic Forum, in Waco, Texas. But the more substantive criticism is that it has a scattershot approach to economic policy, with little regard for the nature of markets. The White House pushed an energy plan that was not much more than a sop to big oil. It imposed high tariffs on foreign steel, which, though a boon to the domestic steel industry, hurt domestic steel users, alienated our trading partners, and compromised America's role as the leading advocate of free trade. Then, last week, under political pressure, it scaled back some of the steel tariffs. Bush signed a fat farm bill full of puzzling subsidies to agribusiness. And he was slow to respond to the crisis of confidence on Wall Street, offering lectures on individual responsibility instead of pressing for systemic reform. Practically the only thing that the Administration has been principled about is its tax cut.

The conventional explanation for such inconsistency and incoherence is that Karl Rove, the President's chief political adviser, has been overruling the ex-C.E.O.s—that political expediency has trumped ideology. Protectionism may be bad for the country as a whole, but it's good for potential Bush voters in the steel states; farm subsidies may hurt consumers, but they help representatives from the farm states. Yet, while there's no doubt that Rove wields great power, there are reasons to doubt whether the Bush Administration was ever really committed to a pro-market—as opposed to a pro-business—agenda.

Almost none of the C.E.O.s on the Bush team headed competitive, entrepreneurial businesses. The majority of them, in fact, made their bones in protected or regulated industries, where success depends on personal lobbying and political maneuvering. Bush himself, of course, built a small fortune on family connections, finagling a spot on the board of Harken Energy, and securing a publicly financed stadium for the Texas Rangers. Dick Cheney, meanwhile, got the top job at Halliburton almost solely because of his political connections. His successor there, David Lesar, has said, "What Dick brought was obviously a wealth of contacts." Wealth of contacts, indeed: under Cheney, Halliburton expanded internationally, gained $1.5 billion in subsidies from the U.S. government, and added a billion dollars in government contracts.

CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

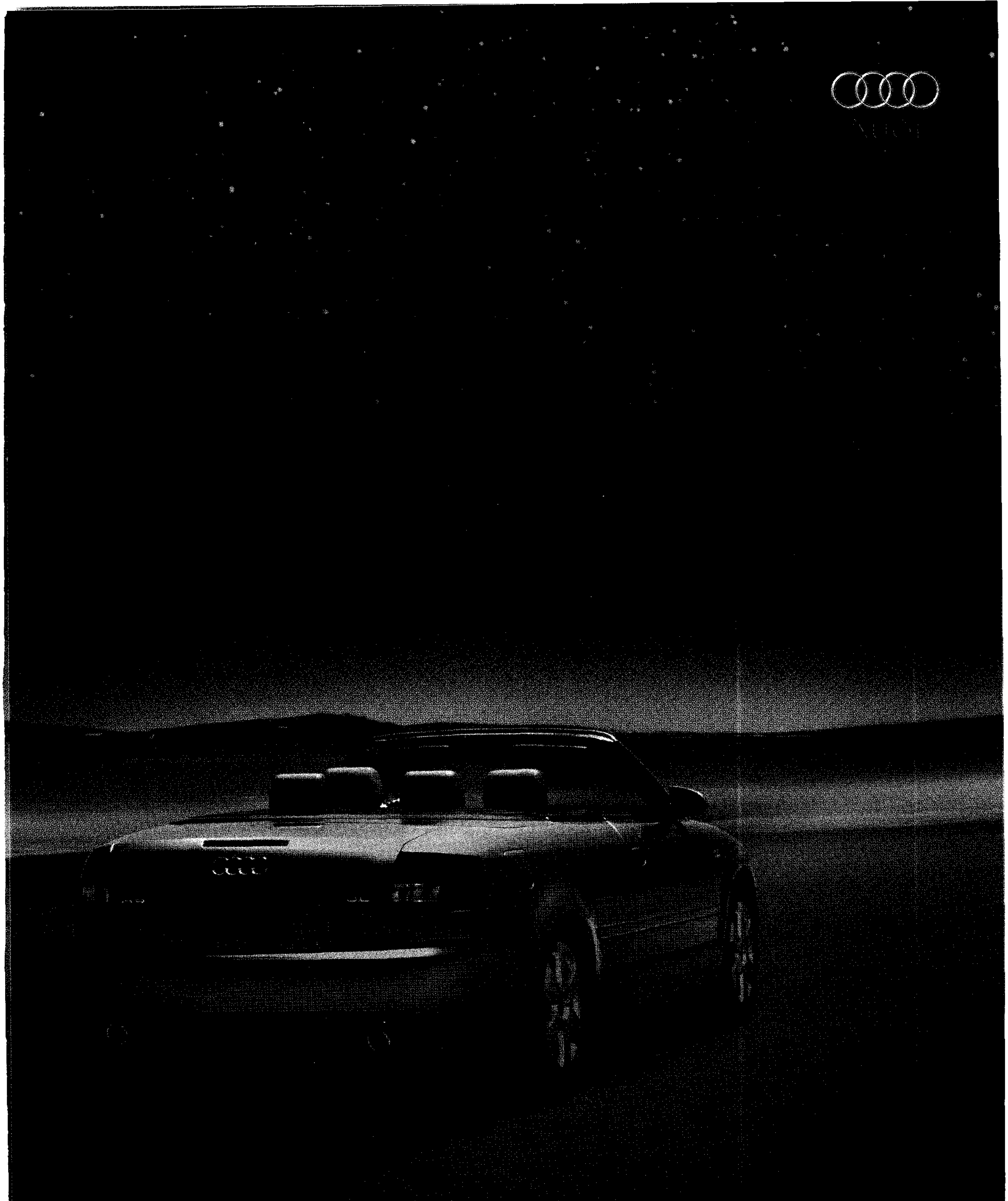
What about Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill? Yes, he did a fine job of reviving the fortunes of the aluminum giant Alcoa. But he did so, in part, by helping to orchestrate an international price-fixing cartel. In 1994, in Brussels, after a fierce lobbying effort by O'Neill and his corporate peers, five countries and the European Union agreed to slash aluminum production to drive up aluminum prices. By the end of that year, prices had nearly doubled and political favoritism had rescued Alcoa from the whims of the free market.

Secretary of Commerce Donald Evans ran an oil-and-gas company. Mitch Daniels, the head of the Office of Management and Budget, was a vice-president at Eli Lilly. Army Secretary Thomas White was the head of energy trading at Enron. Air Force Secretary James Roche came from Northrup Grumman. And Navy Secretary Gordon England put in time at General Dynamics. All these companies depend for success on regulatory approval, government largesse, or cartel-like machinations. This is especially true of the energy industry—the Bush Administration's finishing school—in which the greatest determinant of a company's annual performance is a price more or less fixed in Vienna by a cabal of sheikhs.

In fact, the Bush economic policy looks a lot like what the political scientist Theodore Lowi called "interest-group liberalism." As Lowi saw it, the rise of government regulation and independent bureaucracies had turned the process of policymaking away from the pursuit of the common good—however imaginary that might be—and toward a divvying up of the spoils by politicians and interest groups. As long as the government is as big and as active as it is in the United States, the incentive for interest groups—like big oil and big steel—to seek succor from it will exist. And the Bush Administration seems especially amenable to such blandishments (at least, when they come from business, rather than, say, labor).

Mind you, there's nothing inherently corrupt here. Lobbying, fixing, finagling: it's just business, of a kind. The point is that such ways of doing business have very little to do with free-market capitalism. They have more in common with crony capitalism, in which whom you know is more important than what you do and how you do it. That's the world Bush's key policymakers come out of: they've made their careers by circumventing the free market. Why expect them suddenly to embrace it?

—*James Surowiecki*



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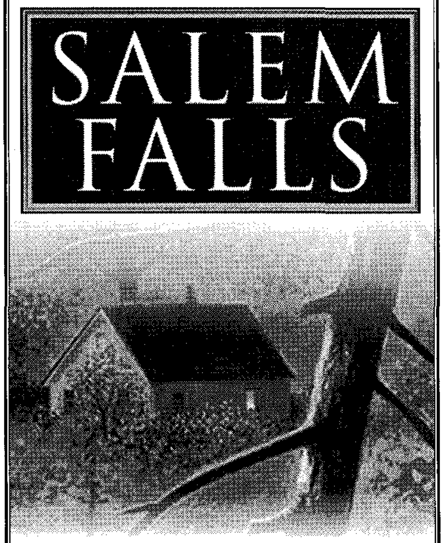

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LETTER FROM CHINA

BEACH SUMMIT

Where China's leaders go to decide the future.

BY PETER HESSLER

My trouble with the police started at Lin Biao's former mansion, in Beidaihe, a beach resort on the Bo Hai Sea, about two hundred miles east of Beijing. It didn't feel like a very risky spot—the house was empty, and, officially, nothing was happening in Beidaihe. But everybody knew that the government had come to town. Each summer, the top Communist leaders meet in Beidaihe and hold secret conferences that help determine the country's direction. The domestic press never reports on the meetings until they're over, but the signs were everywhere. Haitan Road, where the officials have their summer villas, was closed to most traffic. Convoys of black Mercedes sedans periodically swept through town. Police stood on virtually every street corner.

The meetings had started earlier than usual, in late July instead of August, and the rumor was that the succession issue had grown tense. It is expected that after the Sixteenth Congress of the Communist Party of China convenes, this fall, the nation's leader, Jiang Zemin, will give up at least one of the three posts he holds: general secretary of the Party, head of the armed forces, and President of the People's Republic. But there are signs that Jiang and other members of the Old Guard are resisting retirement, and experts say that the current Beidaihe meetings are the first battleground for these issues. Communist China has never had an orderly succession. For the past half century, every transfer of power has involved coups or power struggles.

Lin Biao's mansion sits at the top of Lianfeng Mountain Park, like a monument to the hazards of power in China. During the early years of the Cultural Revolution, Marshal Lin Biao was Mao's anointed successor, and his summer retreat, which was famous for its seventy-foot-long indoor pool, reflected Lin's status. But, in September of 1971, Lin, after allegedly organizing a coup against Mao, tried to flee China. He left Beidaihe and was apparently on his way to the Soviet Union when his plane crashed in Mongolia. In the years since his death, he has been portrayed as China's worst traitor, and also as a very strange man. According to Mao Zedong's personal physician, Li Zhisui, Lin Biao was terrified of wind, light, and water. He refused to drink anything; his wife dipped his steamed rolls in water to prevent him from getting dehydrated. That made me wonder about the swimming pool. The doctor also reported that Lin could move his bowels only if he placed a pan atop his bed, squatted above that, and covered himself with a tentlike blanket. Everybody I met in Beidaihe told me that I should take a look at Lin Biao's former home.

The sprawling gray brick mansion was in bad shape. Lianfeng is a public park, but the house is surrounded by an eight-foot-high wall, and visitors aren't allowed inside. Red paint peeled from around the windows, and the sun had bleached the roof tiles to the color of sand. Two lightning rods poked above the surrounding pines. A Chinese tour group passed by. Their guide was talking about the pool.

On the way back down the hill, I stopped to jot some observations in a notebook. A young man in his early twenties walked past and asked what I was writing.

"Just my diary," I said.

"Can I see it?" he said, more urgently.

"It's nothing," I said. "I was just resting for a moment. I'm leaving now."

I made it fifty feet before he pulled out a badge—plainclothes cop.

"Let me see your notebook," he said.

"This is a public park," I said. "I haven't done anything wrong. My visa's fine."

I showed him my passport and then continued walking toward the exit. I was angry at myself—I knew better than to take notes in a sensitive place. But in the past I had never had police trouble in a public park. The cop followed, talking on his cell phone. I heard the sound of people running to my left, and then three uniformed soldiers appeared and blocked my path. The soldiers were skinny men in their early twenties, and they looked scared; they were dealing with a foreigner. Three more soldiers jogged over and cut off my retreat. Another plainclothes cop joined the first, and together they demanded my notebook. There was nothing sensitive in the book, but I didn't want to hand it over; I'd written down the contact information for some Chinese I'd met earlier in the day. I knew the police might track them down and cause trouble.

Within ten minutes, three officials from the local foreign-affairs department had arrived in a black Chinese-made Audi with tinted windows. The leader flashed his I.D. I handed him my passport. He recognized the "J" on the visa, which meant that I was a registered foreign journalist; the Chinese issue special visas to writers to make it easier to track them. I told the officer that this was a public park, and I hadn't broken any laws.

"We're not arresting you," he said. "We're just asking you to wait a minute."

"If you want to search me, then you'll have to arrest me," I said. "And I'll call the U.S. Embassy to report the arrest of an American citizen."

I took out my cell phone. They stood thirty feet away, talking in low voices. A couple of them made phone calls. After a few minutes, the foreign-affairs officer walked over.

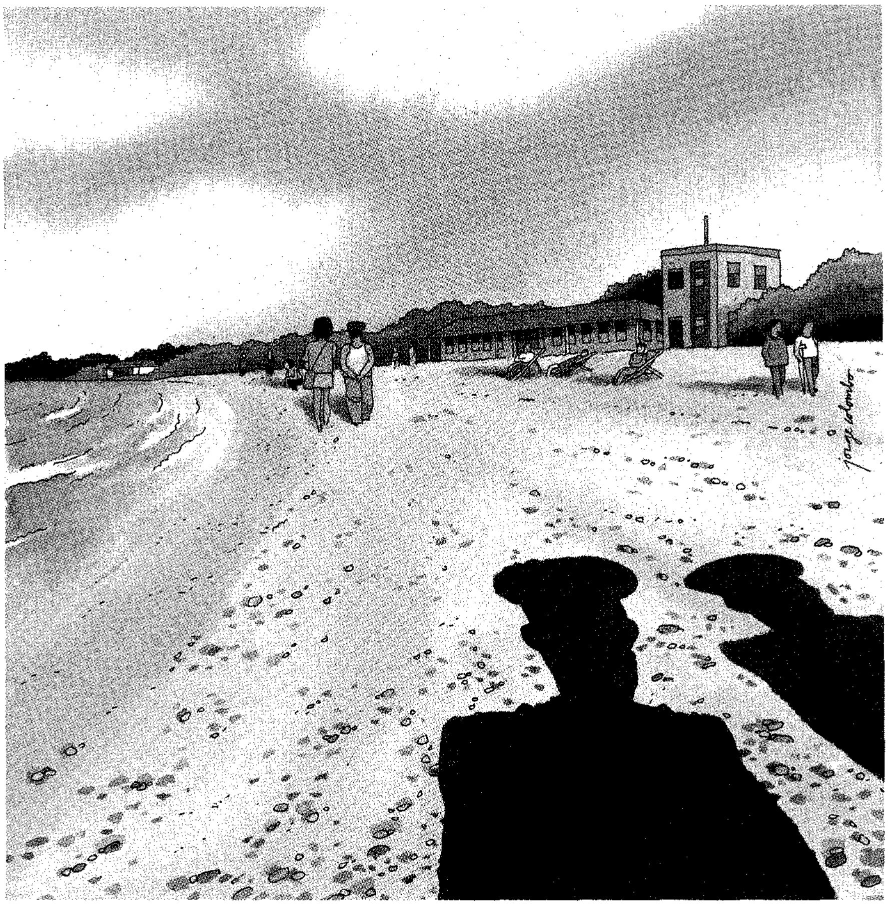
"It's your choice," he said. "They just want to look at your notebook. It's no big deal. You can show it to them or you can refuse."

I told him I was keeping the notebook.

"Well," he said. "Then you can leave now."

I walked away without looking back. I figured I'd see them again.

Beidaihe appeared deceptively peaceful. The sea was the color of old gray silk, and the streets were lined with willows and plum trees; cicadas the size of wrens hummed rhythmically. Couples rented bicycles built for two. Westward along the coast, the beaches were carefully divided: one strip was reserved for vacationing soldiers of the People's Liberation Army; another section belonged to the State Council; another was the private beach of the Diplomatic Services Bureau. After that came a wedge of sand that was open to anybody who paid a dollar's admission, and then there was the bustle of the free public beach: photograph venders, drink sellers, and people who rented out shaded bamboo beach chairs. Women in skirted swimsuits waded tentatively into the water; men tucked cigarette packages into the waistbands of their Speedo-style trunks. The public beach stretched for half a mile and then ended abruptly at a roped-off border patrolled by uniformed guards. The next section was reserved for the government leaders, but the guards wouldn't say exactly which dignitaries were in town. The first subtle signal of their presence came during the last week of July, when newspapers reported that Li Peng, the legislative chief, had been in Beidaihe when he received the speaker of the Maltese House of Representatives. The reports said nothing about the secret Chinese leadership meetings. They noted only that Chinese-Maltese bilateral ties were stronger than ever.



The public strip of sand ended abruptly at a roped-off area patrolled by guards.

JORGE COLUMBO

Government villas lined the hills above the private beach. The first Beidaihe beach houses were built by foreigners in the late nineteenth century. After the Communist revolution, in 1949, Beidaihe was converted into a vacation spot for government officials and members of work units. Model workers were rewarded with free trips—a week in the sun for a lathe operator or a ditch digger. Nowadays, most of the town's two million annual visitors are independent vacationers, but the coast is still dotted with government-run vacation spas and sanatoriums whose names have the ring of an earlier age: the Tianjin Teachers' Sanatorium, the Railways Cadre Resort.

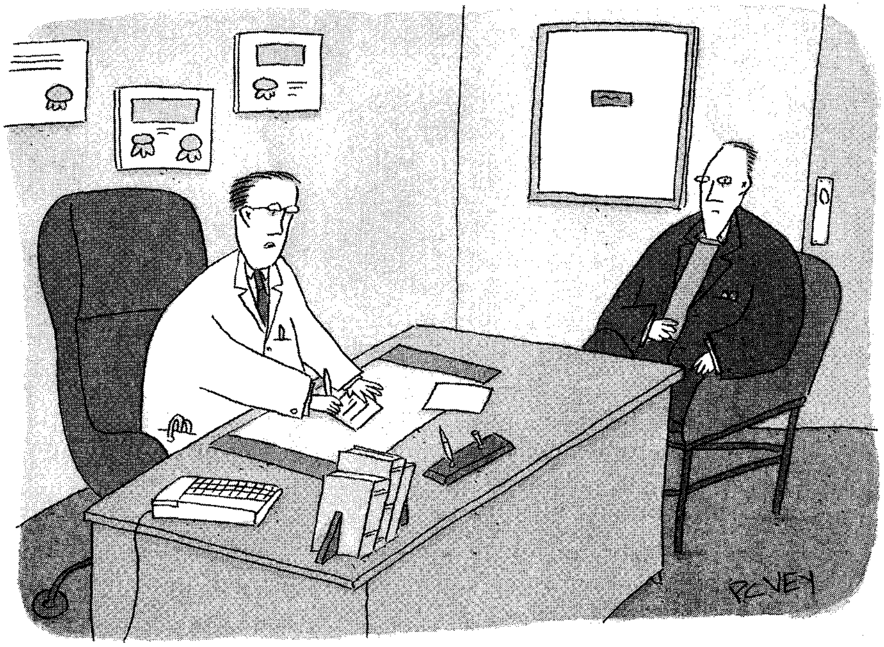
I was staying at the Sanatorium for Chinese Coal Miners. The resort opened in 1950 to provide both treatment and vacation accommodation for miners, who were heroes of the proletariat. Even today, tour groups arrive from mines in the interior—wide-eyed men in shorts, nylon socks, and loafers. The miners stand in packs, gazing wistfully at the sea; most of them can't swim.

The sanatorium hospital, which specializes in treating necrosis of the hip joint, is no longer strictly for coal miners. Most patients still come from traditional work units, but they pay for part of the treatment themselves. My fellow-guests included a tax-bureau official from the northern province of Heilongjiang, a couple of oil-field workers from Daqing, and a woman from the Shanghai bureau of the *People's Daily*. A retired postal worker was a veteran of the Korean War. He told me that, in 1950, not far from the Yalu River, he had fought with Lin Biao's Thirty-ninth Army as it held firm against MacArthur's troops. He told me the same thing I'd heard from every other Chinese veteran of that war: "Americans can't eat bitter. They aren't as tough as Chinese."

I liked listening to the patients chat in the late afternoon as they sat in the shade in front of the clinic, enjoying the ocean breeze, their crutches propped nearby. Their conversations drifted idly, as rhythmic as the hum of the cicadas. Occasionally, they discussed politics; once, I asked about the political meetings across town. "When it's done, they'll have reports in the paper," the tax-bureau official told me. "But until then it's not our business."

On my first day at the sanatorium, I met a seventy-two-year-old ethnic Russian named Sergei, who had suffered a stroke and was receiving therapy. His left side was partly paralyzed—his hand was strapped to a paddle to prevent the fist from clenching. He was in a wheelchair. He greeted me in perfect Chinese. He told me that his family had fled Siberia in 1938; since then, he hadn't left China. He had been a member of the Chinese Communist Party for fifty-two years. When I asked him why he left Russia, he sighed and said, "That's a long story."

Sergei was more forthcoming when one of the other patients asked him how he had come to China. He said that in the nineteen-twenties and thirties the Japanese had sent secret agents to Siberia, and Stalin had finally ordered the expulsion or relocation of Japanese, Chinese, and Koreans. Sergei's parents were poor peasants, but they had befriended some Chinese who were doing business in Siberia. In 1938, during the actions against the foreigners, the Chinese persuaded Sergei's family to move south with them, because conditions in Siberia had become so bad. "Stalin had some successes, but he also made some mistakes," Sergei explained.



"I'm sending you to someone who can afford your brand of optimism."

"Like Mao Zedong," said the *People's Daily* reporter.

"Lenin was better than Stalin," somebody else said. "Lenin didn't make big mistakes."

"Wasn't Lenin a Jew?" a third person asked.

"Lenin was Russian. He wasn't a Jew."

"Why is it that Russian women are pretty when they're young, but then they get so fat?"

"I thought Lenin was a Jew."

"It's the way they eat."

"They eat soup before dinner instead of after."

"Russian women get fat because they don't care," Sergei said authoritatively. He was six feet tall and as thin as a birch branch. His wife was Chinese; before they met, she had been in a dance troupe that entertained soldiers during the Korean War. An explosion had left her partly deaf. "Russian women just don't worry about getting fat," Sergei said.

After the incident with the plainclothes cop at Lin Biao's mansion, I had lunch at a restaurant and then returned to the sanatorium. The Sanatorium for Chinese Coal Miners was a large, wooded complex with more than two dozen buildings, and I was staying in the old V.I.P. quarters. Marble goats frolicked in the grass out in front. I noticed a man standing near one of the goats. He took out his cell phone when I came into view, and then he walked into the lobby ahead of me.

My room was on the second floor. On the way to the stairs, I turned slightly and caught another glimpse of him: crewcut, dark polyester slacks. He talked into his phone, staring at me.

I waited in my room. Whenever I have trouble in a Chinese city, it's only a matter of time before a foreign-affairs official comes to kick me out. Technically, a foreign journalist is supposed to apply in advance before going anywhere; virtually nobody obeys these rules anymore, and usually I travel undisturbed. But on the rare occasions when I attract police attention the response is typically swift: an officer politely tells me that he would be happy to have me visit again in the future, provided I apply to his office. In the meantime, I should return to Beijing.

My two-room suite had a musty

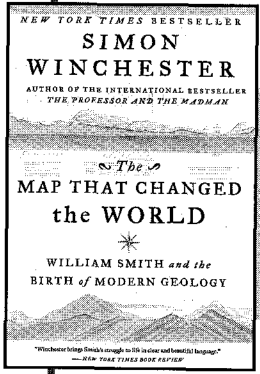
smell, but the light was good, and there was a balcony. Next to the telephone, a "Services Offered" manual listed damage fines for practically every object in the room. Ashtrays cost twelve cents each. Ruined carpet went for $6.05 per square metre. If I smashed the toilet, I'd have to pay $60.53.

After thirty minutes of waiting for the knock on the door, I fell asleep. The confrontation over the notebook had left me exhausted, and I slept for more than an hour. I awoke disoriented, and then I remembered where I was: the $3.63 pillow, the $4.84 sheet. For some reason, there wasn't a price for the bed. I went downstairs, where the crew-cut man was still in the lobby, cooling himself with a bamboo fan. He saw me and froze, the fan directly in front of his face.

There wasn't much talk in Beidaihe about the succession. Whenever I asked about it, people shrugged and changed the subject. Occasionally, the answer was delivered metaphorically. Sergei compared the transfer of power in the government to what happens in a family. "Say the father gets old and puts the eldest son in charge," he said. "It's not right for the younger sons to resist him. Unless he makes some major mistake, he should remain in charge." Sergei had been a low-level politician—he'd served for three years in the People's Party Congress in the western city of Urumqi—and he said that China should learn from the mistakes that Russia had made during perestroika. "Gorbachev was too much in a hurry," he said. "They should have reformed the economy first and gone slower with the politics."

Most educated Chinese expect that the Presidency will go to Hu Jintao, the current Vice-President. The constitution requires that a new President be chosen after this year, and although the post is largely ceremonial, there is a growing sense that Hu has been quietly consolidating power by placing his supporters in high positions in the provinces. In May, he visited the United States to meet with President Bush and other political figures, and the trip was viewed as a step toward the Chinese Presidency.

Hu remains a mystery to the average Chinese. He is fifty-nine years old and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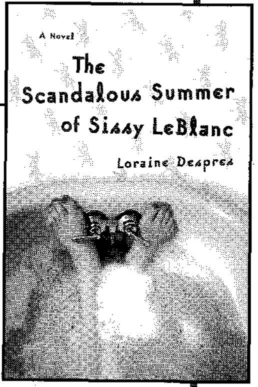

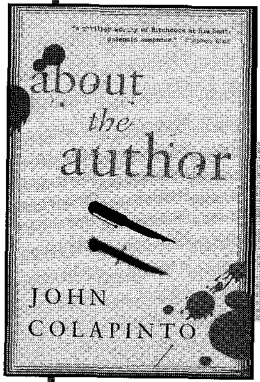

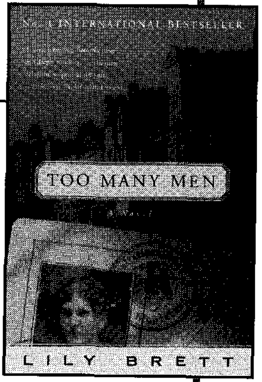

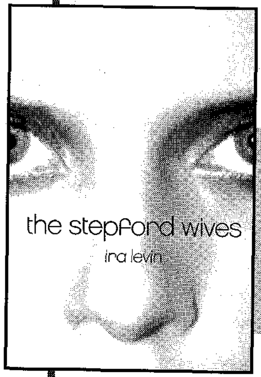

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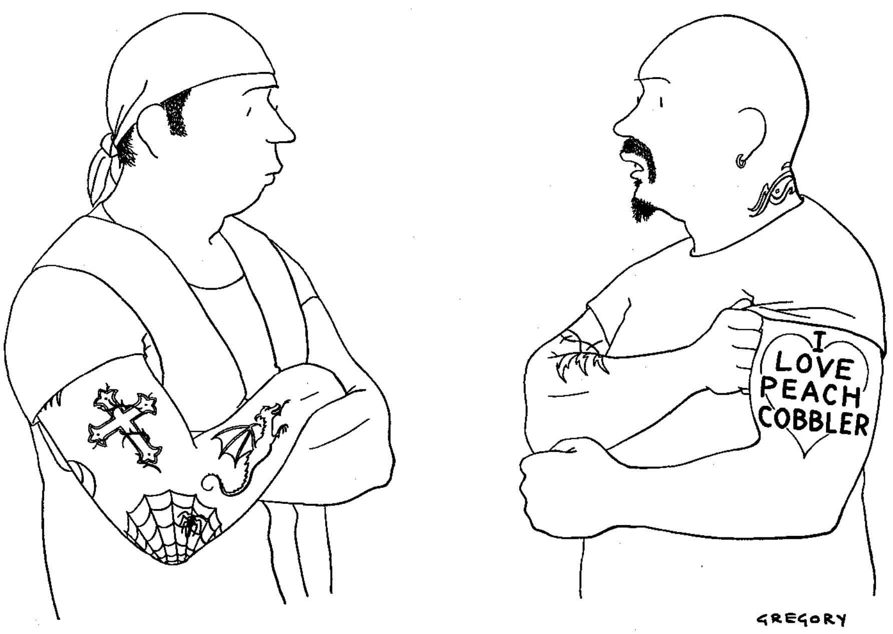

"Never get a tattoo when you're drunk and hungry."

• •

has spent much of his career in the Chinese hinterlands. He never grants interviews. Many Chinese first became aware of him in May of 1999, after the NATO bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade. Protests were held outside Western diplomatic buildings in Beijing and other cities—clearly the work of local political organizations—but China's three most powerful men were circumspect. President Jiang Zemin had too much to lose by speaking publicly during a crisis that was still developing. Zhu Rongji, the premier, having recently pushed for China's admission to the World Trade Organization, was seen as too pro-American. Li Peng, the legislative chief, had been chosen to give public statements during the Tiananmen Square protests, in 1989, and he has been unpopular with the Chinese public ever since. So in 1999 the role of Party spokesman fell to Hu Jintao.

A day after the NATO bombings, Hu appeared on China Central Television and gave a short speech. He wore glasses and a dark suit, and his thick black hair was slicked back. He kept his hands clasped in front of him. He looked stiff and nervous. But he criticized NATO and officially endorsed the protests, saying that the "broad masses" should carry out their demonstrations "in good order and in accordance with the law."

Hu Jintao's career has been constructed largely out of difficult situations. He spent twenty years working in the poor provinces of Gansu, Guizhou, and Tibet. In December of 1988, after rising ethnic tension contributed to a leadership purge in Tibet, he was appointed to the province's top position, that of Communist Party secretary. Two months later, he was called upon to give a eulogy at the funeral of the Panchen Lama, the most important Tibetan holy man after the Dalai Lama. Some Tibetans believed that the Chinese government had arranged for the Panchen Lama to be murdered; relations between China and Tibet had already deteriorated far beyond the point of eulogies. Hu quoted Deng Xiaoping's praise of the Panchen Lama as a staunch patriot of China. Within a month, after dozens of Tibetans died in violent clashes with the police, Tibet was placed under martial law, which lasted for two years. During this time, Hu was neither particularly cruel nor particularly skillful. He simply followed orders and rode out the storm.

Gao Ming and Wei Sicong were the most outgoing patients in the sanatorium. They came from the oil fields of Daqing, and they both had bad hips. In the nineteen-sixties, Daqing was a national model for Chinese industry, but recent layoffs led to protests by as many as fifty thousand workers earlier this year. Such demonstrations have become common in industrial parts of China, where the reform and privatization of state-run industries is a pressing issue.

Gao's and Wei's work units hadn't been affected by the layoffs; each of them still earned roughly two hundred dollars a month, and they told me they liked their jobs. Gao was a fat thirty-two-year-old with a quick laugh; he had nearly finished his two-month treatment, which involved a combination of traditional Chinese medicine, injections, and ultrasound. Gao told me that necrosis of the hip can be caused by three factors: hormone imbalances, excessive drinking, and trauma. He believed that the first two had brought about his hip problems.

Wei Sicong said that in his case it was a matter of all three. He was thirty-nine years old and he did manual labor on the oil fields. Wei had a crewcut and a scar that started at his hairline and ran straight down his forehead like an exclamation point. He was well built and he liked going shirtless. A gold chain hung around his neck. He wore a fake Rolex. He flirted with the nurses, and they liked it.

When our talk turned to politics, Wei told me that the Chinese leaders he most admired were Mao Zedong; Tang Taizong, the second emperor of the Tang dynasty; and Genghis Khan (Wei considered the Mongolian conqueror Chinese because Inner Mongolia is now part of China). When I asked about Jiang Zemin, Wei shrugged. "He's fine," he said. "But it's hard for him to compare with all these famous leaders from history."

In China, it is largely the intelligentsia and the foreign observers who are engaged in spreading rumors about the succession; most of the rumors have their origins in government propaganda. Over the past few months, there has been an intense nationwide campaign in support of Jiang Zemin's "Three Represents" prescription for China's development. The plan was first introduced in February of 2000, although it wasn't fleshed out until July 1, 2001, when Jiang gave a speech marking the eightieth anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party. He proposed that the Party represent three aspects of modern China: advanced "productive" forces, advanced culture, and the interests of the majority of the people. Since then, work units all across China have been called upon to study the "Three Represents," and the plan is praised daily in official newspapers. Many expect that there will be an attempt this fall to enshrine the "Three Represents" in the constitution, alongside Mao Zedong Thought and the Deng Xiaoping Theory, which moved China away from Marxism toward a "socialist market economy." There are reports, too, that high-ranking military officials and provincial leaders have been circulating petitions requesting that Jiang remain as head of the armed forces and general secretary of the Communist Party. And even though the constitution requires that he give up the Presidency in 2003—he is finishing his second five-year term—there are rumors that he is resisting that as well.

Jiang Zemin is seventy-six years old, and he first gained high national office in 1989, when, as Party secretary of Shanghai, he kept the city peaceful during the Tiananmen Square crackdown. Since the death of Deng Xiaoping, in 1997, Jiang has been the most powerful figure in the government, but experts believe that he shares a large degree of authority with other leaders. Economic policies are generally attributed to Premier Zhu Rongji. Li Peng, despite his unpopularity, remains a powerful figure in the government. Many say that Zeng Qinghong, the Communist Party's personnel chief, has enormous influence on Jiang.

Most Chinese spend little time thinking about what will happen after Jiang Zemin. Unlike former Communist leaders, Jiang is neither a war hero nor a former peasant, and he has failed to capture the popular imagination. He wears heavy, old-fashioned glasses, and in his public appearances he seems sometimes to deliberately echo his more revered predecessors Mao and Deng. Jiang is neither loved nor disliked. Some suspect that the "Three Represents" is meaningless—the emperor's new propaganda.

In substance, the "Three Represents" has resulted in capitalists' being invited to join the Communist Party for

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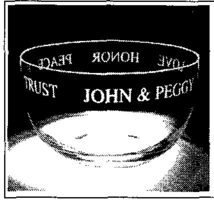

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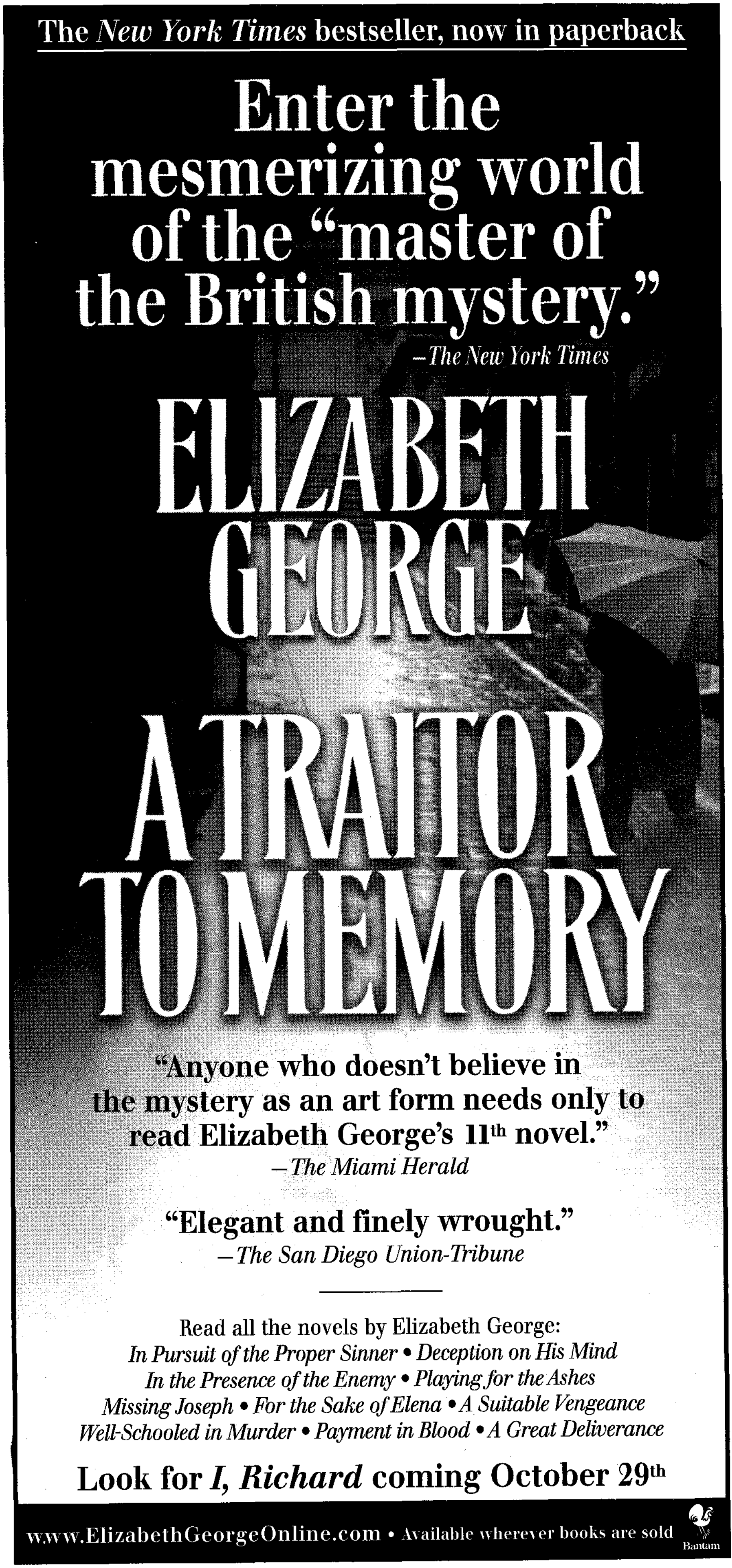
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the first time—a significant change that was resisted by conservatives. But Jiang's July 1st speech did not explicitly outline this invitation, and for the millions of Chinese who are forced to study the "Three Represents" in their work units the twenty-thousand-word-speech is an exercise in tautology: "All relations of production and superstructures, regardless of their nature, develop with the development of productive forces. . . . As for how things will develop specifically in the future, the answer to this question should come from practice in the future." It is only when the speech defines a negative that the language is clear: "We must resolutely resist the impact of Western political models such as the multiparty system or separation of powers among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches."

In the same way, it is easier to identify Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao by who they are not. They are not Mao Zedong, and they are not Mikhail Gorbachev. China is no longer ruled by one man's whim, and it is not yet ruled by law. The People's Republic is the first major Communist state to have outlived the cult of personality, and its totalitarianism has evolved into something else: authoritarianism, tolerated by citizens who have survived far worse.

Although the plainclothesmen were always there, nobody approached me, and there was no effort to kick me out of Beidaihe. But whenever I walked on the grounds of the sanatorium shadows moved through the trees on a parallel path. Outside the front gate, as many as four men waited; as soon as I left the complex, they activated their cell phones. Finally, I approached two of them.

They tried to appear nonchalant. One was the crewcut man—heavyset, in his forties, wearing a dirty tan T-shirt. His partner was better dressed: a fake Izod shirt and black leather loafers that featured the *Playboy* logo. He had bad skin. I asked where he was from.

"Changchun," Playboy said, naming a city in the northeast. He told me that he was in Beidaihe for therapy, and I asked what was the matter.

"Nothing's wrong," he said. "I'm just resting. It's vacation."

Playboy clearly didn't enjoy talking

with me. He commented awkwardly on Beidaihe's good weather and nice beaches, and then said he had to leave. He and Crewcut shuffled off. It was one of the few conversations I'd had with a Chinese in which I wasn't asked a single question.

The day that Gao Ming's hip treatment was finished, he telephoned and invited me to go out drinking to celebrate. I didn't know whether I should go—the oil workers were simple men without political interests, and I was afraid that my trouble with the cops would somehow compromise them. I decided that it was best to explain my concerns to Gao Ming and see how he responded.

But as I was walking through the sanatorium to meet Gao Ming, Playboy appeared and took a seat near some of the patients. Crewcut came from another direction and stood nearby.

Nobody else seemed to notice them; the patients chatted as usual. For the past two days, I had felt myself slipping into a solitary world; my attention was focussed on the surveillance, and yet life around me continued as usual. Gao Ming hobbled over and shook my hand, smiling broadly. Two of the other patients pulled up in a car and told us to hurry, because everybody was waiting. Reluctantly, I got inside. As we left, I saw Crewcut put his phone to his ear. I imagined the command: Look for three guys on crutches and a foreigner.

We hired a private room on the second floor of a restaurant. There were seven of us, the crutches lined up neatly against the wall. It was warm, and one by one the men took off their shirts in preparation for the drinking. A waitress served warm beer and ice cubes.

An old man who worked in a coal mine was smoking Big Double Nine cigarettes. "That was Chiang Kai-shek's favorite brand," Wei Sicong pointed out.

"Do you know what Mao smoked?" Gao asked me.

I guessed the brand that is named after the central government compound in Beijing: "Zhongnanhai?"

"Zhonghua," Gao corrected me. "China brand."

"Deng Xiaoping smoked Panda cigarettes," somebody else said.

"Zhou Enlai smoked Zhadan."

I asked what Jiang Zemin smokes.

"He doesn't smoke. The leaders watch their health nowadays."

Wei Sicong changed the subject. "What's the difference between Chinese women and foreign women?" he asked.

Wei thought a moment and then said, "Foreign women have bigger breasts."

After a while, I went downstairs to see if Playboy or Crewcut was on the job. I didn't see either of them. Back at the table, Gao Ming asked if I liked Beidaihe. We had been drinking steadily for more than an hour, exchanging toasts around the table, and his face was flushed. I chose my words carefully.

"To be honest, I've had some problems here because I'm a journalist," I said. "It's not usually this way, but there have been a lot of police following me. Actually, there were two plainclothes officers in front of the hospital when we left."

"I already know about that," Gao Ming said.

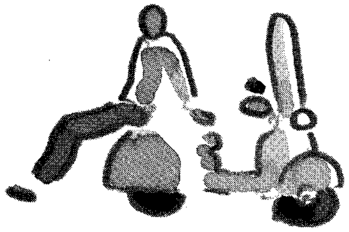
"You know about the police?"

He nodded. His eyes were so calm that it was a moment before I could continue.

"I don't want to cause you any trouble," I stammered. "I didn't think I should come tonight."

"It's no trouble," he said. "It doesn't worry us. Anyway, there's nothing you can do about it," he added. "Just ignore it."

He made a toast to his home town, which was halfway to Siberia. The room went silent: no murmurs, no cicadas. The only sound was the ice clinking as we raised our glasses to the oil fields of Daqing. ♦



From the Albuquerque (N.M.) Journal.

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MY GOALS

BY ELLIS WEINER

I wanted to make my first million by the time I turned twenty-five. By thirty, I was going to break into double digits. By thirty-five, I'd be executive vice-president—and by forty I'd buy the company. By the time I was forty-five, I would be acquiring other companies, with the aim of creating an international biochemical-entertainment conglomerate that could maybe, just maybe, make a difference.

Ambitious? Hey. Why not?

All along, of course, I'd be planning for retirement. How? By setting up a diverse portfolio of stocks and bonds, which I would then manage shrewdly, under the guidance of skilled financial consultants, dedicated professionals sensitive to my specific investment style—my tolerance for risk, my interest in particular sectors of what has become an increasingly global economy. They'd be knowledgeable about long-term strategies and committed to helping me realize my unique, individual vision for the future.

Then, at fifty-five, I would retire—just cash out and walk away, so I could concentrate on the important things. I'd want to spend more time with my family—good, solid time, really connecting with the kids, because our children are our future. And as for my wife, the woman who would have stood beside me during those years of hard work and sacrifice, and who would understand, better than anyone, how much I'd want to build a boat by hand and sail it around the world with my dog . . . well, I planned to get to know her, and fall in love with her, all over again.

I'd have other goals for retirement. I'd want to do something good for the earth, because this is the only planet we've got. And I'd want to do some "crazy" things, too—maybe learn to play the cello, or explore my creativity by writing and painting, to express myself, sure, but for other reasons as well. I figured by then I'd have accumulated a lifetime of experience (and perhaps even a bit of wisdom!), and it would be time to give something back—to the community, to our nation, and to the world. Because that's what I'm all about.

Then, at the end of the day, I'd sit on a dock looking out over a clear mountain lake, and fish, at sunset, with my wife and my children, and their wives and their children and maybe even their children's wives, and my good old dog, secure in the knowledge that, after a lifetime of work, we were all provided for, no matter what, and that if something happened to me they would be protected.

Now, though, I'm thirty-six, and I have different goals. Paying for my kids' college education. Paying for my kids' high-school education. Paying for my kids' high-school knapsacks. And not only theirs. I want to pay for my stepkids' education and school supplies, too—because, if I don't, my second wife, their mother, will kill me. And I want to pay twenty-seven per cent of the educational expenses of my ex-wife's stepkids, her second husband's kids from his second wife, after his first wife left him to do the things on her "list of life goals," like skydiving nude over all seven continents, and after his second wife, the mother of his kids, joined the Peace Corps to give something back to the community, which in this case turned out to be the community of Lugoj, Romania. Why twenty-seven per cent? Because the husband's in rehab and my ex has her hands full with the kids and the ostrich farm, and it is what the court has told me to do.

I respect the court. The court administers the laws, and that's what we're all about. We're a nation of laws, not men. It also turns out that we're a nation of women. And we're a nation of children, and knapsacks, and other educational expenses. But I'll tell you something we're not. We're not a nation of people who want to eat ostriches. Or their eggs.

And so my outlook has changed, and I find myself doing things I'd never have imagined before. It used to be that whenever I entered a room I wanted to make an impression. Not to do anything showy or loud, but just to convey, by a certain word or gesture or laugh, a kind of presence. Now? Now whenever I enter a room I want to wash my hands. Yes, it's "crazy," and, believe me, most of the time I don't actually do it. For one thing, I can't. Most rooms don't have sinks. So what I do instead is cry—openly, freely, in public, all the time.

Maybe it's not surprising that my short-term objectives have shifted. I don't think as much about making executive vice-president anymore. Instead, every day I try to take a nice hot bath. Oh, sure, my kids think it's weird and my stepkids think it's goofy and my ex-wife thinks it's pathetic and my current wife thinks it's sick—I don't know how it is at your house, but at mine everybody has an opinion! But I love my family, and, besides, once they start criticizing, if I sing loud enough they really don't bother me.

As for my long-term goals—well, I guess they're the same ones that everybody has: financial security for myself and my loved ones, a quality health plan, and the chance to kick back and really enjoy my golden years with whichever beloved wife I happen to be married to at the time.

And I'm going to get there. How? By acquiring wealth. Which means finding a job—in biochemicals, or entertainment, or anything else that doesn't involve ostriches, and that pays me in money, or wealth, or cash, or whatever, and that gets me out of the house.

Because I want to spend less time with my family. Call it a goal, call it a dream, call it a "game plan for life," but, until retirement, that's my vision for the future: a job that pays money, somewhere not home.

Demanding? Hey. Why not? ♦

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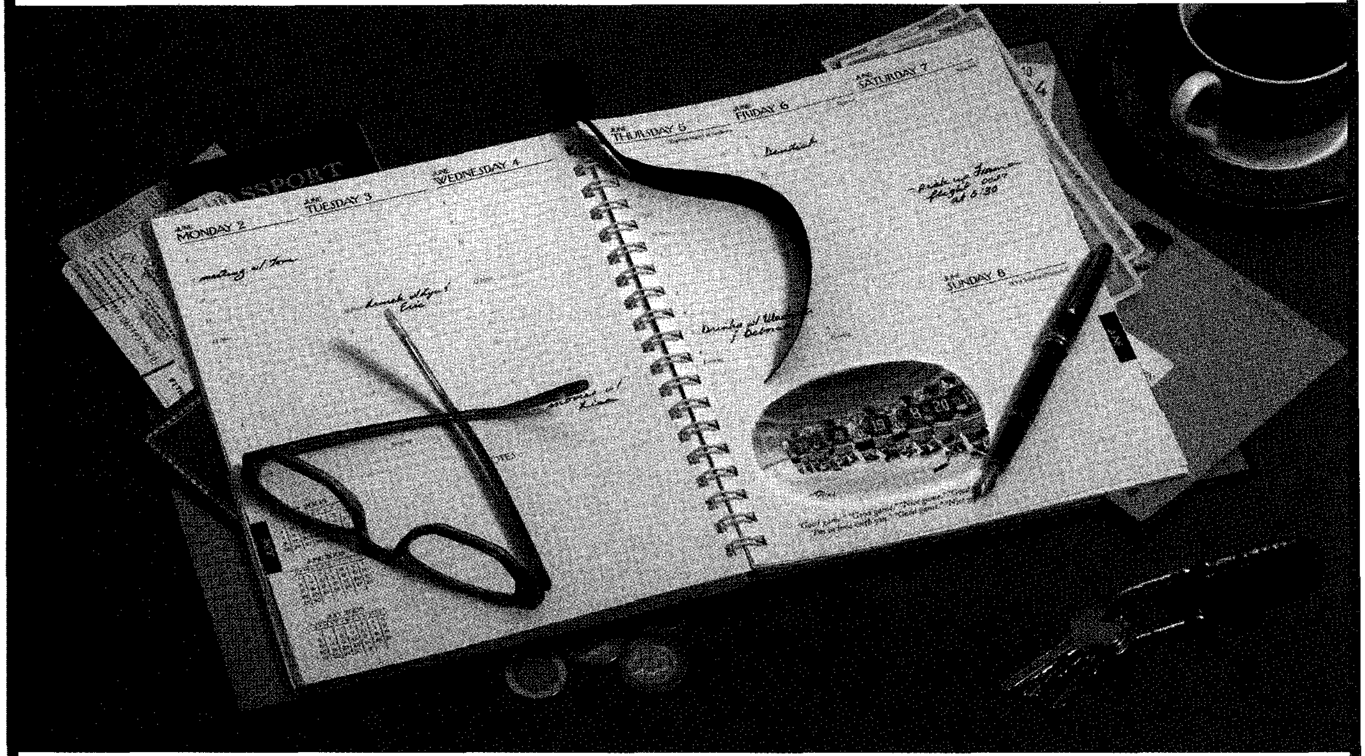

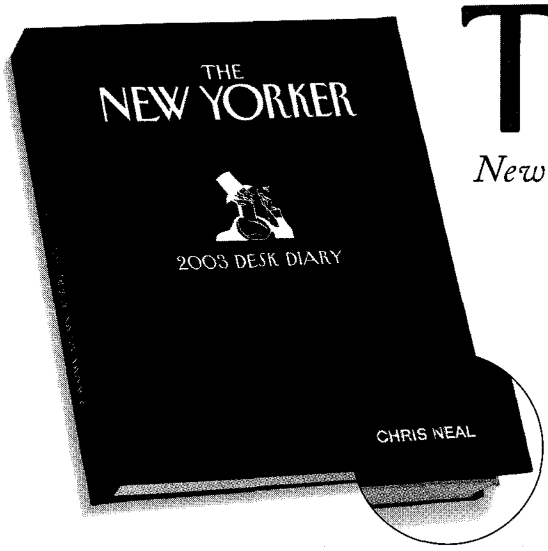

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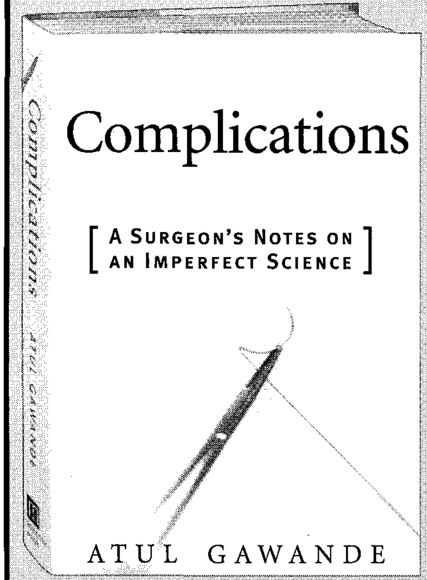

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ANNALS OF RELIGION

THE REFORMER

A priest's battle for a more open Church.

BY PAUL WILKES

In 1993, when the head of the Boston Archdiocese, Cardinal Bernard Law, appointed Father Walter Cuenin the pastor of Our Lady Help of Christians, a Catholic parish in Newton, Massachusetts, the church's spire was corroded, the Celtic cross that topped the spire was badly tarnished, and the shabbiness of the interior was mercifully muted by poor lighting. Today, after a four-million-dollar renovation, the soaring, twenty-five-foot reredos is sparkling white, the intricate patterns of grapes and vines winding about the church's Moorish arches have been faithfully restored, and the crowning cross is a glistening gold. But the changes at Our Lady's, as the parish is popularly known, are more than cosmetic.

As Catholics in other parts of the United States drift away from an institution that many find increasingly irrelevant to their lives, Our Lady's congregation has grown, from about ten thousand faithful but somewhat unenthusiastic parishioners a decade ago to more than twelve thousand active members today. A parish in which a former pastor plastered parishioners' windows with impossible-to-remove stickers if they parked in a reserved space, and where a curate once called parish children "termites," now attracts Catholics from a broad variety of parishes. They come to hear Father Cuenin's challenging sermons about contemporary life and to participate in a dynamic religious community. Some five hundred parishioners are active in programs that help, among others, teen-agers who are searching for a committed faith, women who are suffering as a result of divorce, abortion, or a family loss, and elderly people who are confined to their homes. When Father Cuenin came to the parish, he insisted on being called by his baptismal name—Walter—thereby announcing his egalitarian vision of a Church in which the laity would have a prominent role. He also replaced two priest assistants who were not happy about the new direction with lay pastoral associates.

On a crisp morning last May, the Saturday before Pentecost, Father Cuenin, dressed in a sweatshirt and a pair of khaki shorts, sat in the kitchen of the rectory drinking coffee and reading the papers. A story in the *Globe* reported that Cardinal Law had declared his support for a new set of procedures to deal with sexual abuse by priests, a policy shift that was being described as a national model. The *Herald* also had a story about the Cardinal: "AIDE ADMITS LAW MADE MOLESTER PRIEST A VICAR."

Father Cuenin is a squarely built, muscular man of fifty-six. He wears his light-brown hair, graying at the temples, in a military cut—his father was a Marine Corps officer—and his head and neck seem fashioned from the same sturdy log. He is not a man to raise his voice for emphasis; he registers his points otherwise. He glanced toward the ceiling with a Jack Nicholson look of incredulity. "National model?" he said sardonically. "This is Boston, the epicenter—where it all began. Who do we think we're kidding here, folks?"

The Archdiocese of Boston was in well-publicized disarray. In January, the *Globe* reported that a local parish priest, Father John Geoghan, had been accused of abusing a hundred and thirty boys, one as young as four, over a period of three decades. Cardinal Law, the senior American Catholic prelate and a once frequent visitor to the White House, had been under pressure from many lay Catholics to resign because of his role in transferring Father Geoghan and other pedophile priests from one parish to another, even after their crimes were known.

"Catholicism isn't lived out in Rome, or in some proclamation from chancery offices here in Boston," Father Cuenin continued. "It's lived out in parishes, by real people. And here in a parish, while the issue right now is sexual misconduct, it's the arrogant abuse of power that fuels both the fury people feel and the determination they have for reform. Let's be clear: this is a Church I love, and it's also a Church that drives me nuts. Priests have been forced to remain silent about the supposedly unassailable prohibitions on birth control, second marriages, the ordination of married men and women. How can you arbitrarily close off such issues to the modern mind?

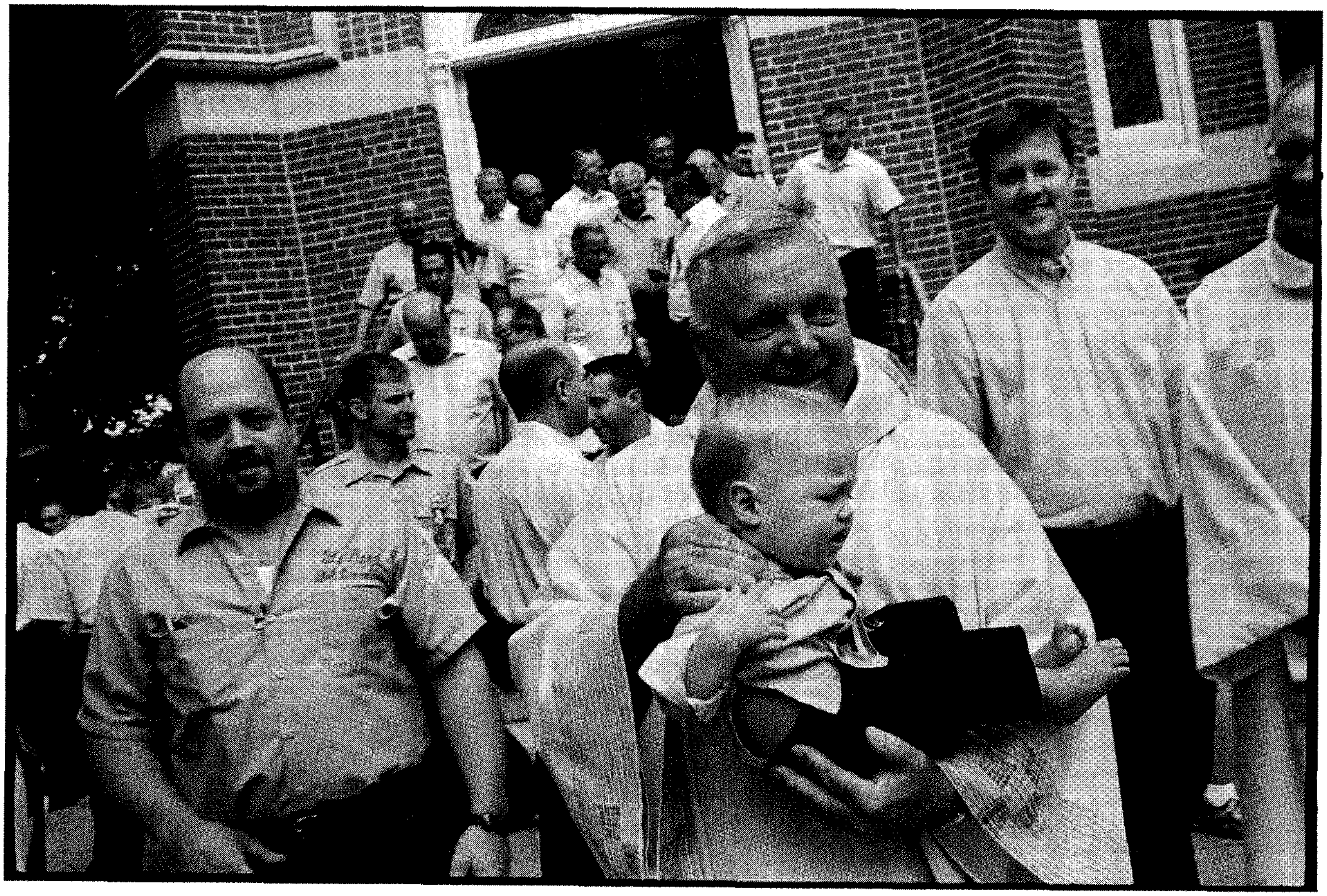
"Laypeople have been treated like so many immature children, incapable of having a real voice in a Church that has proved itself pitifully inadequate in running and policing itself," he went on. "You can only shrug it off for so long."

In Boston, the most Catholic of American cities, the pedophilia scandal has inspired an unprecedented revolt among laity and clergy, who have both made it clear that they want a greater voice in Church affairs. Newton, an affluent suburb just over the city line and eight miles or so from the center of Boston, has become, in effect, American Catholicism's Gdansk shipyard. Father Cuenin, who is one of the prime movers behind an upstart group of clergymen, the Boston Priests' Forum, and is also an unapologetic backer of a range of new lay initiatives, might be considered the movement's Lech Walesa.

During the eight-o'clock Mass at Our Lady's on the morning of Pentecost, Father Cuenin stood in the main aisle, dressed in a blazing-red chasuble, which signifies the fire of the Holy Spirit that descended upon the Apostles fifty days after Easter. He was in the middle of his homily when he grinned like a little boy about to share an important secret. Referring to one of the liberalizing reforms instituted nearly forty years ago by the Second Vatican Council, under the leadership of Pope John XXIII, he said, "Turning the altar around was the easy part, but it implied more, much more than that. We have to face each other—laity, priest, bishop. Nobody can piously keep his—or, for that matter, her—face to the wall in some secret ritual. So the challenge is to change the way the Church *is*, not just the way it looks. Some of you are ready to walk out on the Church. I feel the same way sometimes. But we can't walk out on our family—and this is our family. I think we all sense that something is happening as never before, friends. The genie is out of the bottle. Catholics are not going back to a Church where they have no voice. I know I'm not."

Father Cuenin went on to mention a reform group called Voice of the Faithful, which is advocating that the Church's hierarchy be more accountable to ordinary lay Catholics. He implored his listeners to join the group, telling them that Voice of the Faithful was planning a rally at the Hynes Convention Center, in Boston, on July 20th. He said that he had already bought a ticket for the event, and he urged the congregation to do the same.

In an earlier parish bulletin, Father Cuenin had announced that Our Lady's had declined to contribute its usual do-



"The fault here in Boston is that no one took on Cardinal Law," Father Walter Cuenin said. Photograph by Gilles Peress.

MAGNUM

nation, the cathedraticum, to the Cardinal's budget for the expenses of his office, his household, and his personal charities. Father Cuenin told the parishioners that there were alternative ways for their dollars to be channelled to needy cases, and that they should no longer feel obliged, as they had in the past, to make their donations through the Cardinal's Annual Appeal. What he was advocating, in essence, was conscientious objection, not to Catholic charities but to the Appeal itself.

John R. Quinn, a former archbishop of San Francisco, who is now retired, wrote in a recent issue of the national Catholic weekly *America*, "In terms of its harm and far-reaching effects, the present crisis in the Church must be compared with the Reformation and the French Revolution." To put Father Cuenin's views in perspective, I visited the Weston Jesuit School, a theological center in Cambridge, where he taught sacramental theology and liturgy for ten years. There, in a cramped third-floor office, I met Father John O'Malley, a respected historian of the Church.

"It's impossible to overemphasize both the importance of Vatican II and how its tolerant and open spirit has been largely extinguished by the present Pope," Father O'Malley told me. "He has created a law-and-order, fear-driven, clerically controlled Church. Diocesan priests who didn't leave—and plenty did—basically took one of two paths. Some continued the thrust of Vatican II and became our great parish priests. Others agreed to be silent on issues of change."

I asked Father O'Malley whether there were any precedents for the grass-roots activism advocated by Father Cuenin and Boston lay Catholics. "Worker priests, priests' councils—yes, they've appeared, only to be suppressed or to run out of steam," he said. Citing one of the Church's most revered reformers, he added, "Remember, Francis of Assisi, in the thirteenth century, was a layman. In our century, we had Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement. But they addressed social ills, not Church ills. No, there has never been a truly significant revolution from within the Catholic Church by laypeople. That is why this is so intriguing: no mob in the street, but thoughtful Catholics coming out of the parishes, carefully organizing to redress wrongs."

Every afternoon at two o'clock or so, Father Cuenin takes a walk through the neighborhood around Our Lady's. The exercise provides an hour's break in a schedule that requires him to supervise a staff of eleven, preside at daily Mass, three weekend Masses, weddings, funerals, and parish and school events, and to attend to administrative issues.

"People today are looking for authenticity, not just some kind of Catholicism where you go in on Sunday and punch your card, performing your 'obligation,'" he said as we walked along the shaded sidewalks of Newton. "They are looking for a framework for their lives, inspiration to go on, to be decent, to raise good kids, to be good citizens and people. And this crisis has caused them to wake up. 'Why have I been putting up with this all these years?' I hear them saying. This is the moment of truth. If it's not seized upon, people will simply drift away, and the Catholic Church will become some sort of quaint relic, the place you go for baptisms and weddings and funerals but is otherwise irrelevant to your life."

I asked Father Cuenin to tell me about his path to the priesthood. "I was a good little boy who craved attention," he said, smiling. When his father was stationed in Paris for a time, he began attending daily Mass at Saint-Germain-en-Laye. "My parents were Catholics but not especially religious ones, so no one was pushing me," he said. "I had never really known a priest, so I didn't exactly know what they did, but when I looked up at the altar it got me. That's what I wanted to do with my life. My parents weren't enthusiastic about my entering the seminary; they thought that I had illusions of grandeur. In a way, I did."

In 1963, at the age of seventeen, he began his training for the priesthood in Boston, which had been his parents' home, first at Cardinal O'Connell Seminary and then at St. John's. "Mine was a conservative, cultic vision of being a priest, and pretty unfocussed," he told me. But then he was "blown away," he said, by the emerging tolerance ushered in by Vatican II.

Father Cuenin began to speak out in favor of allowing the seminarians greater freedom within their tightly regimented schedule. The rector of St. John's took him aside and told him that if he wasn't more circumspect he might be dismissed. "I was nervous, of course," Father Cuenin recalled. "I didn't want to be kicked out, but what I was asking for was hardly radical. We were grown men being treated as if we were in grade school. The rector bitterly disagreed, but he sent me off to Rome the next year"—granting a privilege accorded only to the most promising.

In Rome, in 1967, Father Cuenin enrolled in a course in moral theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University which was taught by the German the-

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ologian Josef Fuchs. Fuchs urged his students not to get caught up in the precise accounting of their moments of goodness and their failings, which was the prevailing ethos of Catholicism at the time. He asked them to consider, instead, what he called the "fundamental option" to make their priestly vocations the pursuit of generosity, kindness, justice, and peace. "It was an amazing opening for me, to find that the life of faith could be so dynamic, so charitable, despite our faults," Father Cuenin told me. "It blew out the cobwebs." At his ordination, in St. Peter's Basilica, in 1970, James Hickey, the rector of the North American College in Rome and later the archbishop of Washington, D.C., told him, "Walter, I know you're going be a leader of people. I just don't know where you're going to lead them."

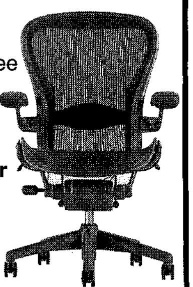
Father Cuenin spent the next three years as an associate pastor in St. Michael's parish in North Andover, Massachusetts, and then went back to Rome to earn a doctorate in sacramental theology. Upon his return to Boston, in 1977, he was appointed to the chancery's tribunal, where he worked primarily on requests for marriage annulments. He was on the sort of track that led logically to a seminary rectorship or to ordination as a bishop. He was also assigned, on a part-time basis, to Sacred Heart parish in Lexington, as an associate pastor. "I finally had the chance to put into effect what had been churning around inside me," he said. Under his tutelage and that of the pastor, Father Ultan McCabe, lay committees performed duties that had once been the domain of priests. Kneelers were removed, and the liturgy was considered no longer a rote exercise but a canvas to be enriched by dramatic readings, dance, and hymns from diverse cultures.

In 1986, a new, more authoritarian pastor was assigned to Sacred Heart. In the course of a few months, Father Cuenin watched the parish's spirit of community dissolve. To him, the appointment signalled a move by Cardinal Law, who a few years earlier had been named the head of the archdiocese, to strengthen orthodoxy and to reclaim the power of the priesthood over the laity. In response, many parishioners withheld their donations. "Their expectations had been raised, and now they were given this," Father Cuenin said. "It shattered them." The archdiocese granted his request for a transfer.

Still, Father Cuenin could not shake the dispiriting experience he had had at Sacred Heart. In 1989, he "hit the wall." Both his parents had recently died, and he felt that it was time to take stock of himself. "I was someone who had basically gone along, even with my misgivings about the Church, for most of my life," he said. "It was my midlife crisis, I guess—time for me to see whether I could remain a priest in a Church that could be so wonderful and yet so cruel, often at the same time." He took a leave of absence, became a travel agent, and set himself the challenge of earning fifty thousand dollars a year, a goal that he easily exceeded. He went into therapy for what he calls "anger, dissatisfaction, and confusion with who I was." He visited churches as an observer, throughout the archdiocese. "It was an eye-opener," he said. "Our newer churches looked like Pizza Huts, with a priest up there clamoring for attention and 'relevance.' In a word, mediocre. I looked at myself, and I realized that I was a pretty decent priest, that I could bring more than that to people. Through therapy, I found out that I didn't have to be whipped into a fury every fifteen minutes when I didn't like something the Church was doing. I found that, after all, I loved being a parish priest."

A year later, after Father Cuenin returned from his leave, Cardinal Law asked him to organize pilgrimages for the archdiocese. He travelled frequently with the Cardinal and found him a personable companion and a skillful politician who, on parish trips, moved from table to table at meals, making sure that he had met everyone and that everyone was enjoying the trip. Although the Cardinal often displayed an easy, common touch, he also seemed to relish the prestige of his position and his access to high Vatican officials. He was customarily addressed as "Your Eminence," and he didn't ask to be called anything else.

In particular, Father Cuenin was bothered by the Cardinal's unyielding



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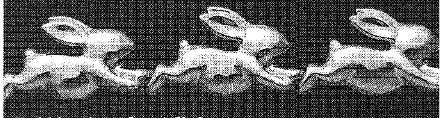

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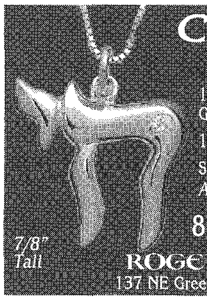

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allegiance to the dictates of Rome. The Cardinal seemed open to complaints about archdiocesan policies, but Father Cuenin noticed that he seldom acted on them. "I was beginning to see a man who had the best of intentions, yet who was afraid to allow the force of ideas he didn't like to take hold," he told me. "For example, the Cardinal called for a study of the living arrangements of priests, but said at the outset that there would be no consideration of priests living in apartments. Even as he asked the question, he wanted to control what the answer would be."

Our Lady Help of Christians is widely considered an excellent parish. Nonetheless, Father Cuenin's pastorate has not escaped the chancery's scrutiny. He hadn't been long in the job when calls started coming in, from the Cardinal himself or from his subordinates, reprimanding him for, among other things, using translations of Scripture that replaced such words as "man" with gender-neutral terms, and for giving a non-Catholic—specifically, the Episcopal bishop of Massachusetts—the Eucharist. Recently, Cardinal Law asked for a full copy of Father Cuenin's statement against a Massachusetts bill that would have narrowly defined marriage as a union between man and woman, thereby disallowing same-sex couples to qualify for benefits. And yet Our Lady's, because of its central location and its excellent facilities, is often used for archdiocesan gatherings. A certain test of wills seems to be going on between Cardinal and pastor, each acknowledging the other's strengths, while working to correct his perceived weaknesses.

"Regardless of our differences, I have no animosity toward the man," Father Cuenin told me. "I have always been treated very well by him. We just happen to disagree. Actually, I admire the Cardinal's loyalty to the Church. But loyalty also demands creative disagreement with teachings and stands that are not enhancing what we are basically trying to do—bring people into a closer relationship with God, with Christ. Loyalty demands that you take uncomfortable stands. And I think the fault here in Boston is that no one took on Cardinal Law. We let things go on."

THE LYRICAL ZONE

A view of the park and a wall in late afternoon light
as in Corot—the skin of a lemon skin of a cheek with powder after a ball
golden air and not a sound no whispers
no stifled cries shaking of sweaty hands no galloping
only the soul becomes a painfully frail cobweb
and lasts in the air like the smile of Gioconda
the smile of an Etruscan girl

smile of the Sphinx

—*Zbigniew Herbert*

(*Translated, from the Polish, by John and Bogdana Carpenter.*)

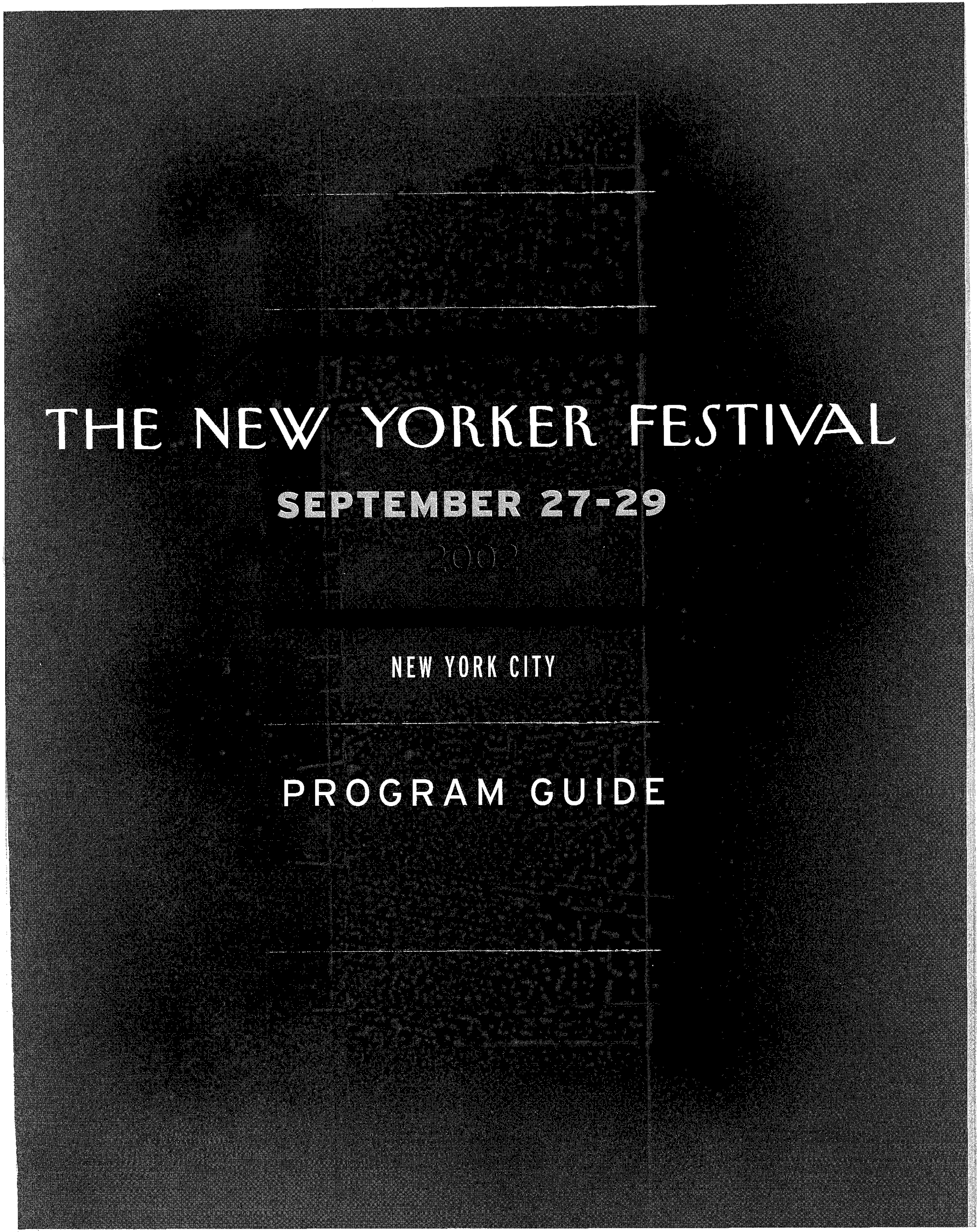
Father Cuenin is equally forthright about his differences with the Vatican. "While I see people moving, very healthily, to a new freedom and depth, ready to take their faith into their lives, the Pope sees a creeping move toward a watered-down Catholicism," he said. "There have been dozens of synods at the Vatican during which hundreds of different opinions were registered, but the final word is always Rome's. And Rome isn't always right. Any cursory reading of history will sustain that point."

One afternoon, as we ended a walk through the parish, Father Cuenin said, "If I were to be brutally honest, I would have to say that for the past few years, beneath all our accomplishments and happiness here at Our Lady's, I've felt a real sadness. I hear heartbreaking stories of people who go from parish to parish to have a baby baptized and are refused because they are married a second time, or not married at all. Or people who sit there every week and feel that they are not worthy to receive the Eucharist because of some Church rule. That's why the Church must change."

Like most of the Catholic clergymen he knows, Father Cuenin only recently discovered that some of his fellow-priests in the Boston archdiocese were molesting children. He had his first personal experience with the problem earlier this year, when Sister Marie LaBollita, a pastoral associate at Our Lady's, informed him that the parents of a family in the parish, a couple named Rodney and Paula Ford, told her that their son, Greg, had been sexually abused some years earlier by Father Paul Shanley. The Fords had been members of St. Jean l'Évangéliste, a once predominantly French parish, which merged with Our Lady's in 1997. The abuse allegedly started when Greg Ford, who is now twenty-four, was a six-year-old student in a religious-education class. Father Shanley had reportedly asked the boy to leave class—a summons deemed an honor—and, in the rectory, had coerced him into a game of strip poker. The seduction progressed to other acts of intimacy, and the abuse continued for six years. Last January, the *Globe* published a story that described the priest's succession of reassignments from parish to parish, despite allegations of abuse. Greg Ford saw a picture of Shanley in the paper and broke down. The Fords filed a civil suit against Cardinal Law and the archdiocese, charging him and other officials with negligence. Cardinal Law, in his response, called the Fords neglectful parents.

One evening, Father Cuenin and I met with the Fords in the rectory of Our Lady's. Paula Ford was a vibrant, voluble woman whose piercing dark eyes were accented by dark-rimmed glasses. Her husband, a police officer at Boston College, was more reserved. The day before, they had been in their lawyer's office with Cardinal Law, who was being deposed on their suit.

"Greg was a happy kid, up to about



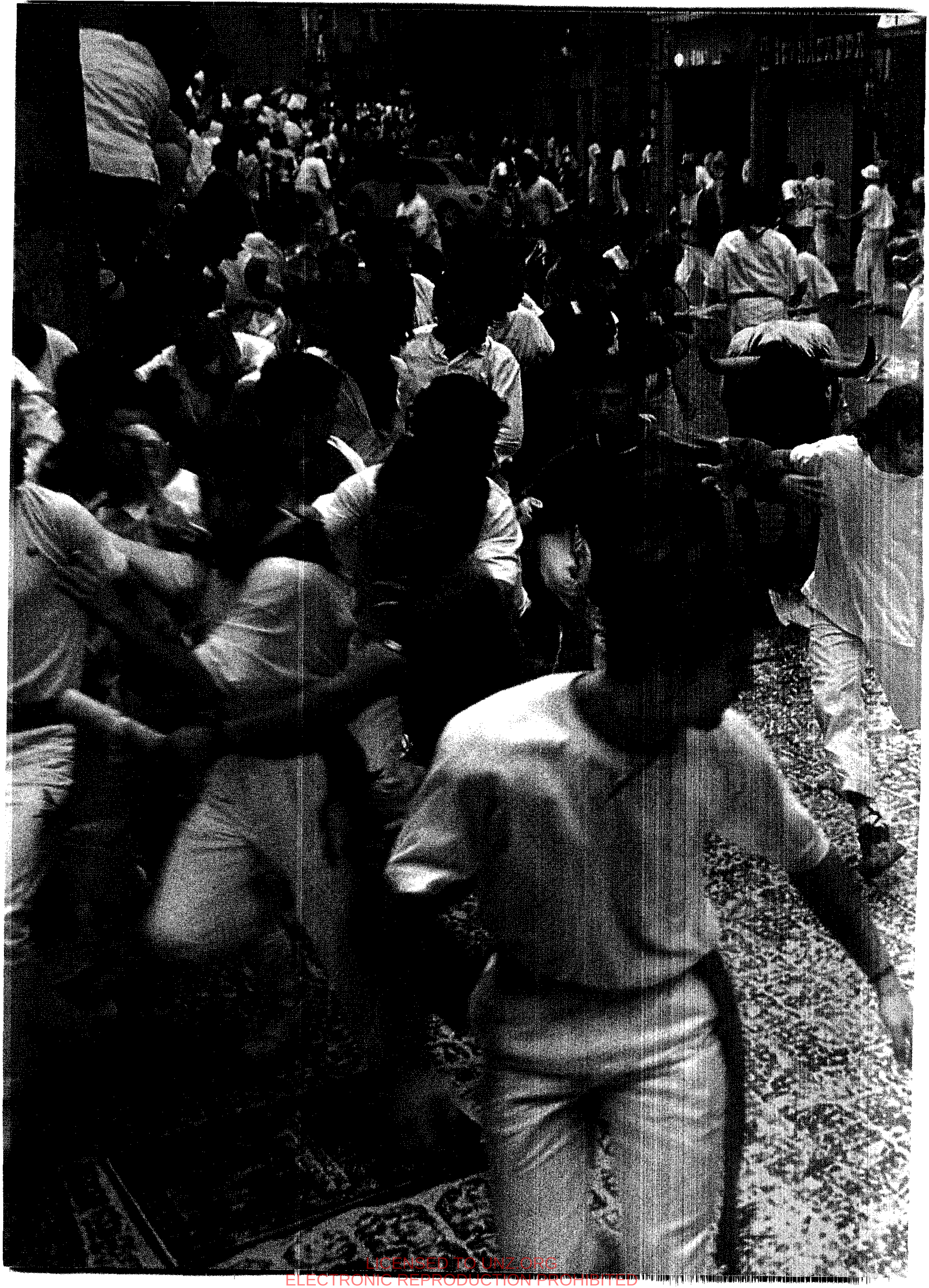
THE NEW YORKER FESTIVAL

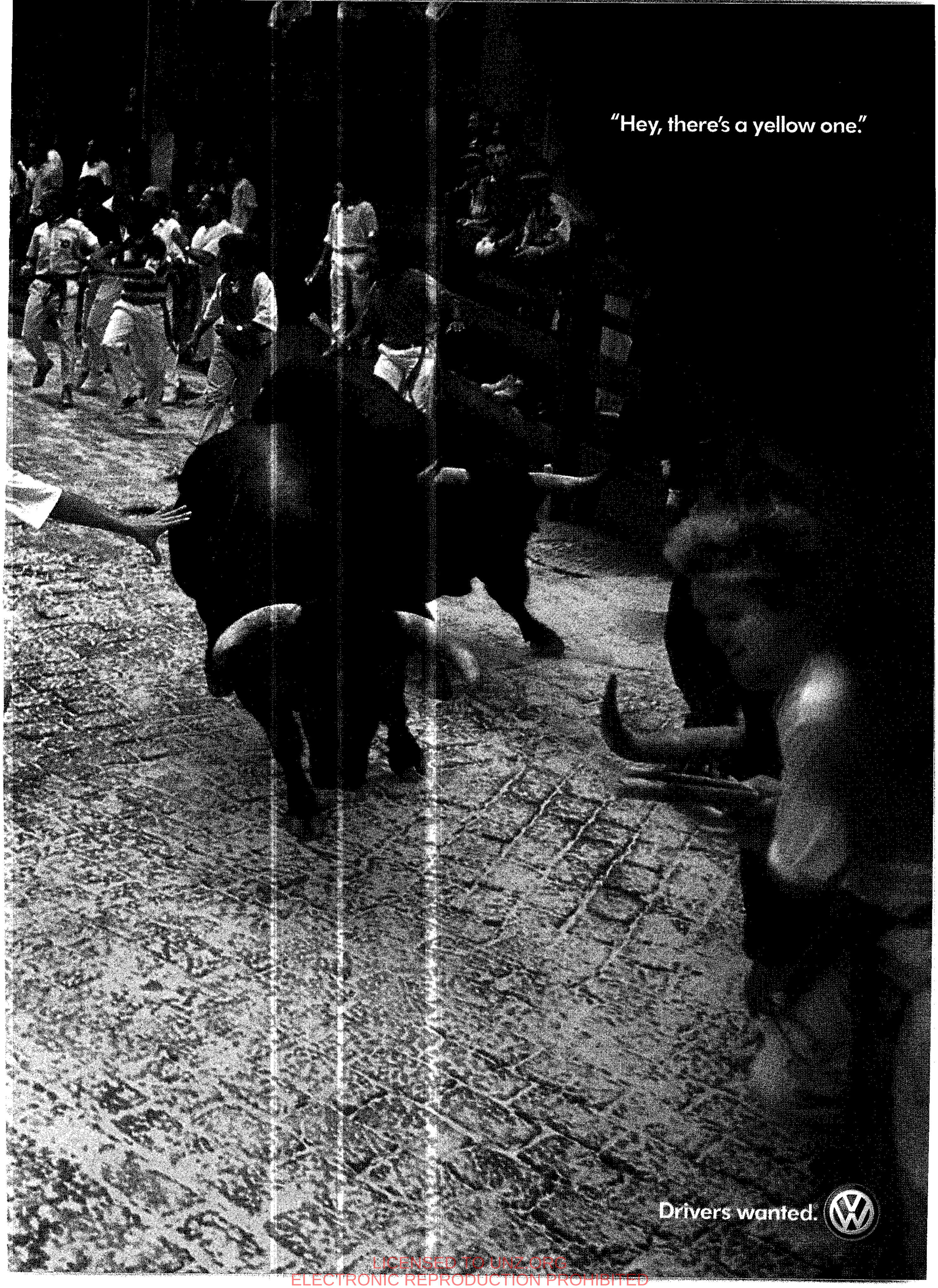
SEPTEMBER 27-29

2002

NEW YORK CITY

PROGRAM GUIDE

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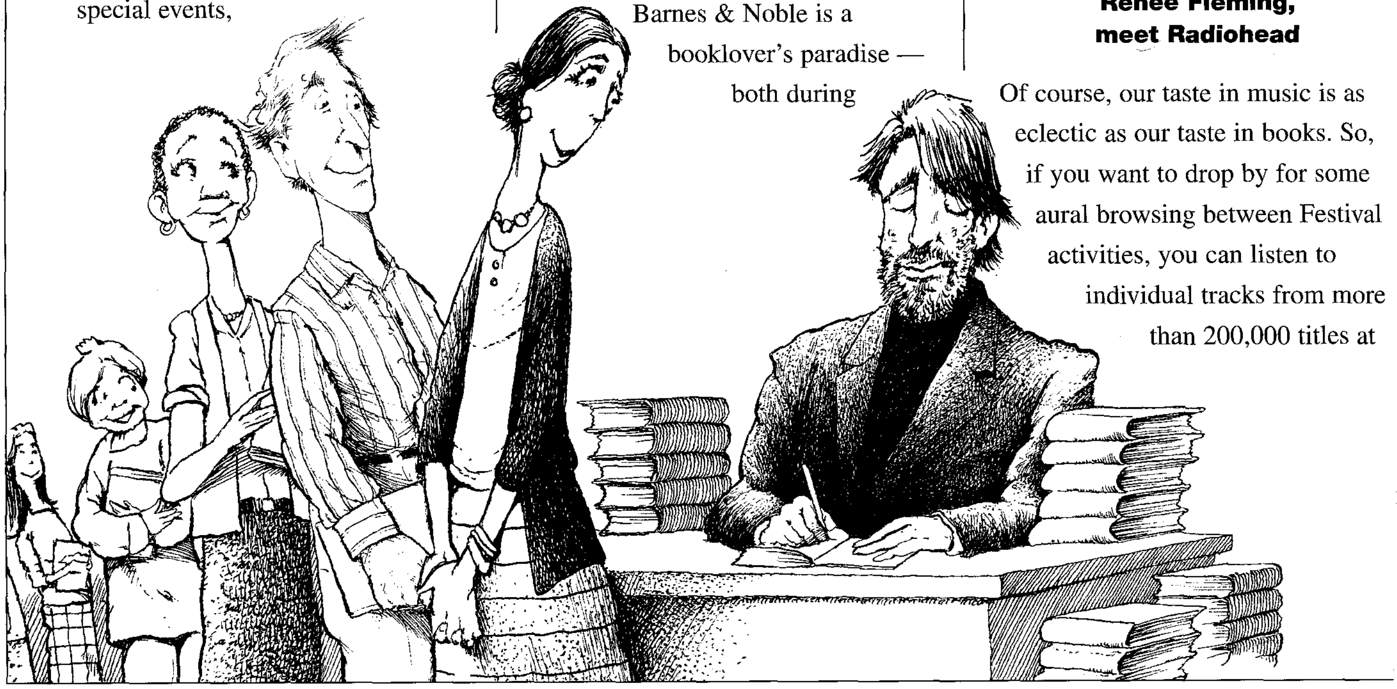

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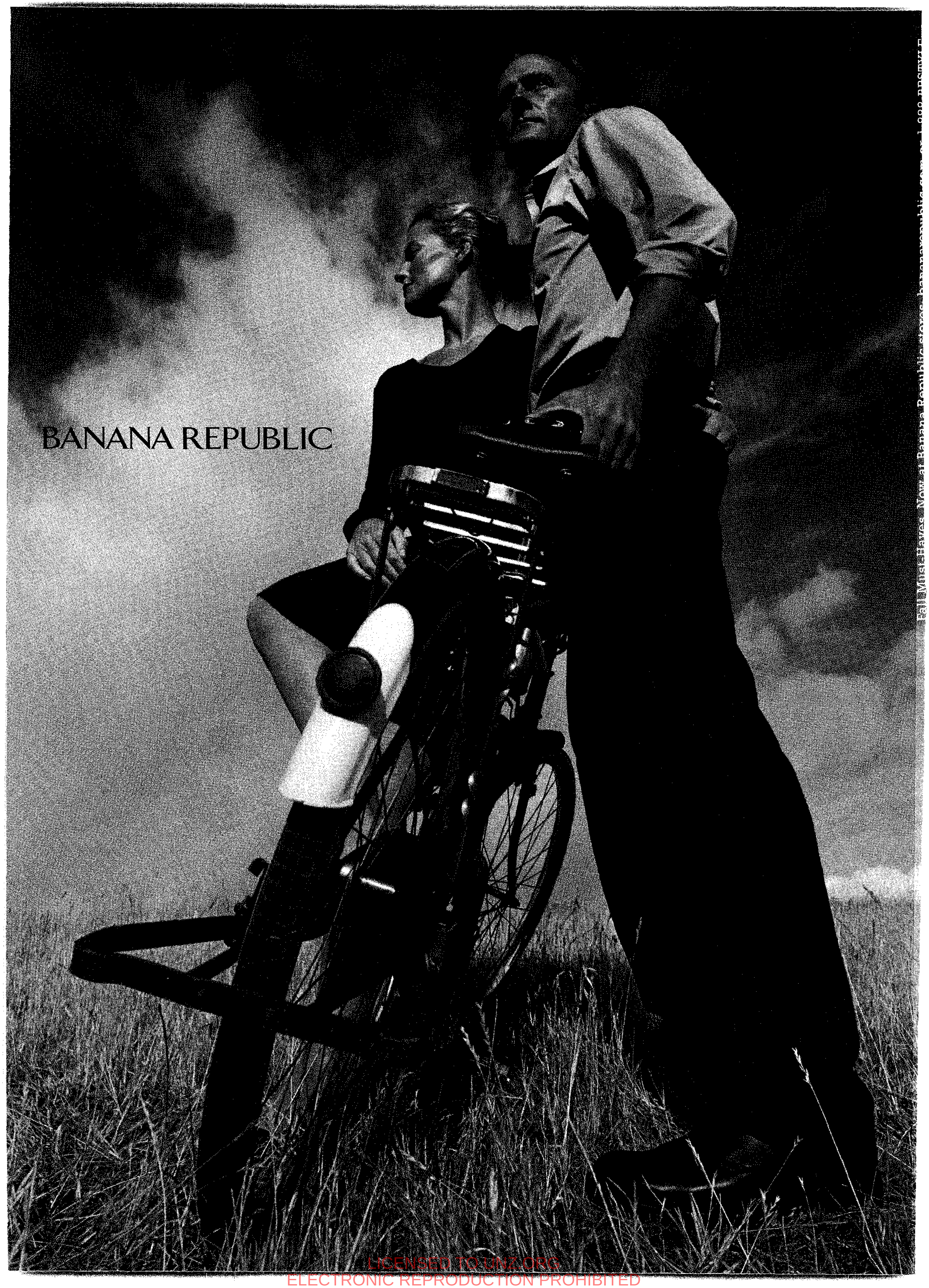

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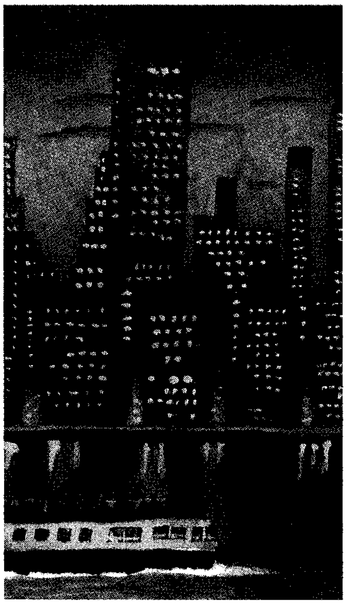

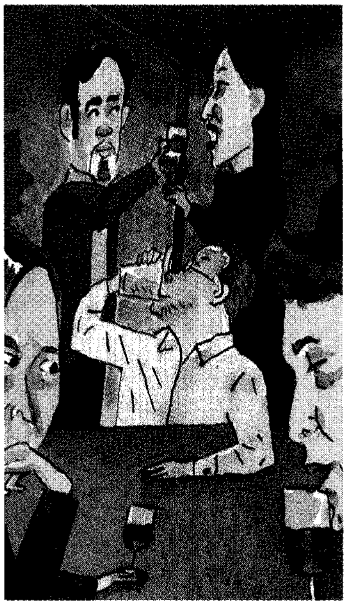

In 2000, The New Yorker Festival was inaugurated to mark the magazine's seventy-fifth anniversary. It was such a success that we decided to make it an annual event. Now, two years—and thirty thousand visitors—later, the Festival returns, from September 27th through September 29th, for a weekend of readings, discussions, interviews, and outings with some of the most talented, thoughtful, and provocative writers, artists, scholars, journalists, filmmakers, and actors working today.

FICTION NIGHT returns on Friday with paired readings throughout the city. In addition to writers who will rejoin us to read current work, this year's program features new participants, among them Haruki Murakami, Ian Frazier, E. L. Doctorow, Amy Tan, Sam Shepard, and David Foster Wallace.

On Saturday, the historian Bernard Lewis will talk about Islam and the West; Anthony Lane will offer his thoughts on sex and violence in the movies; the Reverend Al Sharpton will field questions from Elizabeth Kolbert; and the Nobel Prize-winning poet Seamus Heaney will be interviewed.

In ABOUT TOWN, a new program of excursions on Sunday, you can board a ferry and, in a trip around the island, view the extraordinary skyline of *Manhattan Unfurled* through the eyes of Paul Goldberger and Matteo Pericoli; you can *Come Hungry* and accompany Calvin Trillin on an eating tour of downtown, with a final stop in Chinatown for dim sum; you can beat the crowds to the Metropolitan Museum of Art for a pre-breakfast *Private Viewing* of three art works chosen by Simon Schama, who will discuss what they reveal about power, patronage, and painting.

For Festival night owls, another of this year's new programs, LATE SHIFT, on Friday and Saturday evenings, will showcase some of the coolest talent at some of Manhattan's hottest night spots: the actor and comedian Eddie Izzard at the Bowery Ballroom; the music producer T Bone Burnett with Joel and Ethan Coen at the Directors Guild Theatre; the director Kevin Smith at the Tribeca Film Center.

A cadre of *The New Yorker's* cartoonists will happily amuse you, provided you rise early enough on Sunday morning for a free CARTOON LAUGH-IN. And AN AFTERNOON WITH ELIZABETH BISHOP will bring some of America's leading poets and commentators—the former Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky, Jorie Graham, and James Fenton are just a few—to the Town Hall to celebrate her work and wide-ranging influence.

For three days, the Festival is *The New Yorker* come to life. Please join us; the following pages tell you how.

Illustrations by Mark Ulriksen

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FRIDAY

SEPTEMBER 27, 2002

An evening of paired readings by celebrated fiction writers and poets.
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FICTION NIGHT

Martin Amis and James Fenton

Martin Amis's most recent nonfiction books are "Koba the Dread: Laughter and the Twenty Million," about the atrocities committed by the Soviet regimes, and "The War Against Cliché: Essays and Reviews 1971-2000." He is also the author of a short-story collection and ten novels, among them "Time's Arrow," which was short-listed for the Booker Prize, and "Money: A Suicide Note."

James Fenton has published several volumes of poetry, including "Out of Danger," and a collection of essays, "The Snap Revolution." He was the Professor of Poetry at Oxford University from 1994 to 1999. His book "An Introduction to English Poetry" will be out in November. He has been a contributor to *The New Yorker* since 1994.

9:30 P.M. Knitting Factory
74 Leonard Street

Donald Antrim and Jeffrey Eugenides

Donald Antrim's most recent piece for *The New Yorker*, "I Bought a Bed," ran in the 2002 Summer Fiction Issue. His novels include "The Hundred Brothers" and "The Verificationist."

Jeffrey Eugenides is the author of "The Virgin Suicides," which has been translated into fifteen languages and was made into a feature film. His second novel, "Middlesex," will be published in September.

7 P.M. Anthology Film Archives
32 Second Avenue

Edwidge Danticat

Edwidge Danticat and Junot Díaz

Edwidge Danticat's travel book "After the Dance: A Walk Through Carnival in Jacmel" came out in August. Her novels include "Breath, Eyes, Memory" and "The Farming of Bones." Her most recent book, "Behind the Mountains," will be published in October.

Junot Díaz is the author of the short-story collection "Drown." He edited "The Beacon Best of 2001: Great Writing by Women and Men of All Colors and Cultures."

9:30 P.M. Anthology Film Archives
32 Second Avenue

E. L. Doctorow and Edna O'Brien

E. L. Doctorow's many works of fiction include "Ragtime," "Billy Bathgate," and "World's Fair," for which he received a National Book Award. In 1998, he was honored with the National Humanities Medal. He edited the 2000 "Best American Short Stories" anthology. His book "Lamentation: 9/11" will be published in September.

Edna O'Brien is the author of fifteen novels and five collections of short stories. She has published more than forty works of fiction in *The New Yorker*, her first in 1962. Her most recent novel, "In the Forest," was published in March.

9:30 P.M. Twirl
208 West 23rd Street

Roddy Doyle and Jonathan Safran Foer

Roddy Doyle was born in Dublin. His first novel, "The Commitments," was published in 1987; his fourth, "Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha," won the Booker Prize in 1993. He is the author of two children's books, including "The Giggler Treatment," with the illustrator Brian Ajhar.

Jonathan Safran Foer made his *New Yorker* début last year.

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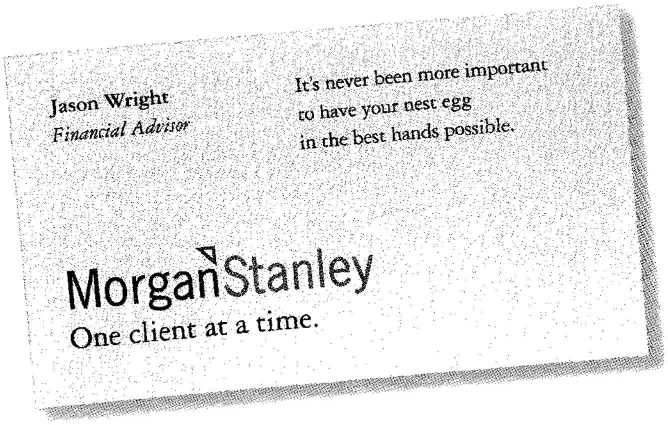

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His first novel, "Everything Is Illuminated," came out in the spring.
7 P.M. Knitting Factory
74 Leonard Street

Dave Eggers and Zadie Smith

Dave Eggers is the author of the best-selling book "A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius." His most recent piece for *The New Yorker* appeared in August.

Zadie Smith's "White Teeth" won the Whitbread First Novel Award. "The Autograph Man," her second novel, will be published in October.
9:30 P.M. New York Quarterly
Meeting House
15 Rutherford Place

Ian Frazier and Steve Martin

Ian Frazier began contributing to *The New Yorker* in 1975. Among his books are the humor collection "Dating Your Mom," "Great Plains," "On the Rez," and "The Fish's Eye: Essays About Angling and the Outdoors," which came out in the spring.

Steve Martin, the actor and writer, has been contributing to *The New Yorker* since 1996. He is the author of a collection of humor pieces, "Pure Drivel," and the novella "Shopgirl," which came out in 2000.
7 P.M. Bowery Ballroom
6 Delancey Street

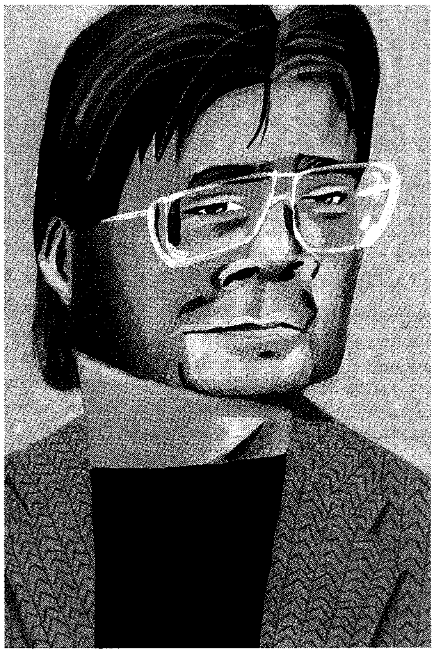
Nell Freudenberger and Lorrie Moore

Nell Freudenberger's début short story, "Lucky Girls," ran in *The New Yorker's* Summer Fiction Issue last year. She is working on a book of stories.

Lorrie Moore has published two novels and three collections of short stories, among them "Like Life" and the best-selling "Birds of America," which was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award.
7 P.M. The Bitter End
147 Bleecker Street

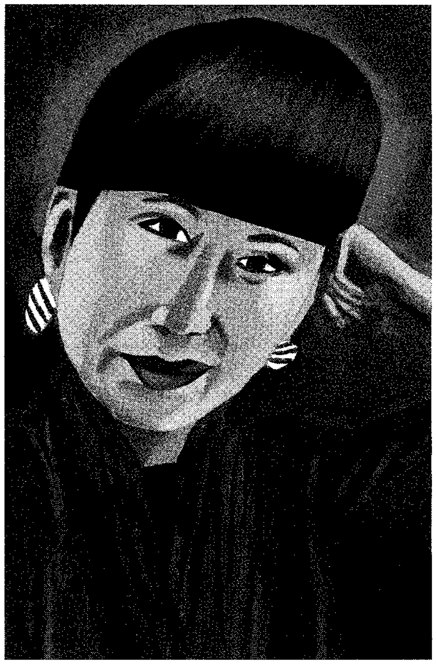
Stephen King and Amy Tan

Stephen King's novel "Carrie" was published in 1974. Since then, he has published more than forty books, including "Everything's Eventual: 14 Dark Tales" and "Dreamcatcher." "From a Buick 8: A Novel" will be published in September. He has been a contributor to *The New Yorker* for more than a decade.



Stephen King

Amy Tan is the author of the best-selling novel "The Joy Luck Club," which was made into a feature film. Her other books include "The Hundred Secret Senses" and "The Bonesetter's Daughter," which was published last year.
9:30 P.M. Bowery Ballroom
6 Delancey Street



Amy Tan

Hanif Kureishi and Andrea Lee

Hanif Kureishi's novels include "The Buddha of Suburbia" and "Gabriel's Gift," which came out in 2001. He also wrote the screenplay for "My Beautiful Laundrette," which was nominated for an Oscar and won a New York Film Critics Circle Award in 1986.

Andrea Lee has been a contributor to *The New Yorker* since 1980. Her books include "Russian Journal," which was nominated for a National Book Award in 1984, and the short-story collection "Interesting Women," which was published in April.
7 P.M. Union Square Ballroom
27 Union Square West

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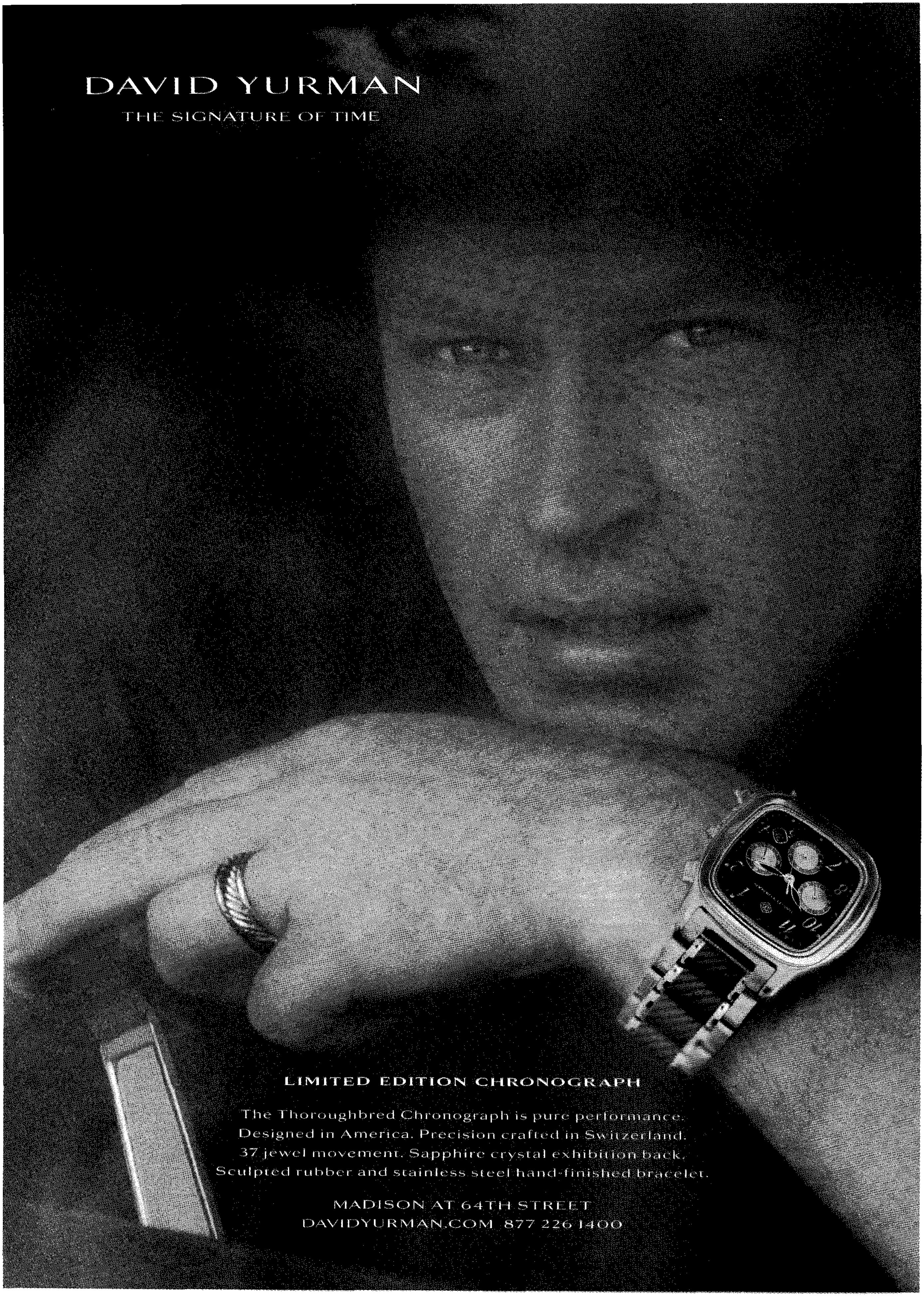

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Neil LaBute and Sam Shepard

Neil LaBute is a playwright and filmmaker. Among his plays are "Filthy Talk for Troubled Times" and "The Shape of Things"; his films include "In the Company of Men," "Nurse Betty," and "Possession," based on the novel by A. S. Byatt. His first *New Yorker* story, "Layover," appeared last year.

Sam Shepard's short stories have appeared in *The New Yorker* since 1996, and he is the author of the collection "Cruising Paradise." His plays include "Curse of the Starving Class," "Mad Dog Blues," and "Buried Child," which won a Pulitzer Prize in 1979. His most recent book, "Great Dream of Heaven: Stories," will be out in October.

9:30 P.M. Shine
285 West Broadway at
Canal Street

Jhumpa Lahiri and Robert Stone

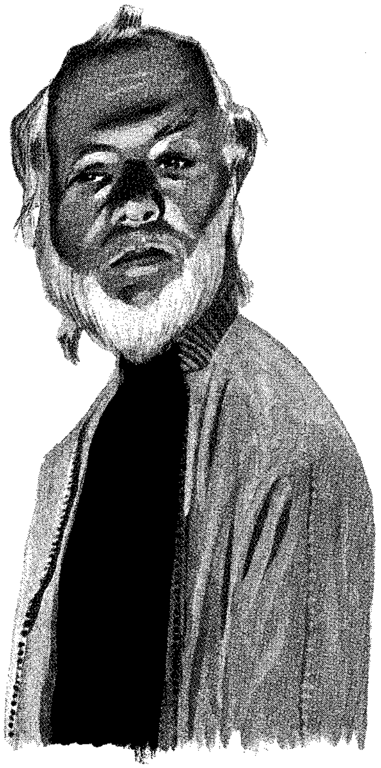
Jhumpa Lahiri's first book, the short-story collection "Interpreter of Maladies," some of which originally appeared in *The New Yorker*, won a Pulitzer Prize in 2000. She is currently at work on her first novel.

Robert Stone is the author of several novels, among them "Dog Soldiers," which won a National Book Award in 1975, and, most recently, "Damascus Gate." He has been publishing stories in *The New Yorker* since 1987.

9:30 P.M. The Bitter End
147 Bleecker Street

Haruki Murakami

Haruki Murakami's work will be read by the actor Paul Rudd; an interview with the author conducted by *The New Yorker's* deputy fiction editor, Deborah Treisman, will follow.



Robert Stone

Haruki Murakami, a native of Kobe, Japan, has been contributing to *The New Yorker* since 1990. His many books, which have been translated into twenty-seven languages, include the novels "Norwegian Wood," "The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle," and "Sputnik Sweetheart." His most recent collection of stories published in English, called "after the quake," came out in August. He is a recipient of the Yomiuri Literary Prize.

Paul Rudd's film credits include "Clueless," "The Object of My Affection," and "The Cider House Rules." He was in Neil LaBute's Off Broadway play "The Shape of Things," and will also be in the film version, to be released next year.

7 P.M. Shine
285 West Broadway at
Canal Street

Annie Proulx and George Saunders

Annie Proulx is the author of two short-story collections, including "Close Range: Wyoming Stories," and three novels, among them "Postcards" and "The Shipping News," which won a National Book Award and a Pulitzer Prize in 1994. Her new novel, "That Old Ace in the Hole," will be published in January, 2003.

George Saunders's story collection "Pastoralia" was named a New York *Times Book Review* Notable Book for 2000, as was his 1996 collection, "CivilWarLand in Bad Decline." His *New Yorker* story "The Barber's Unhappiness" won a National Magazine Award in 2000.

7 P.M. Twirl
208 West 23rd Street

David Foster Wallace and Jonathan Franzen

David Foster Wallace is the author of the novels "Infinite Jest" and "The Broom of the System," two short-story collections, and a book of essays and arguments, "A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again."

Jonathan Franzen won a National Book Award for his novel "The Corrections," portions of which first appeared in *The New Yorker*. The book was a finalist for a Pulitzer Prize and for the PEN / Faulkner Award for Fiction. His other novels are "Strong Motion" and "The Twenty-seventh City."

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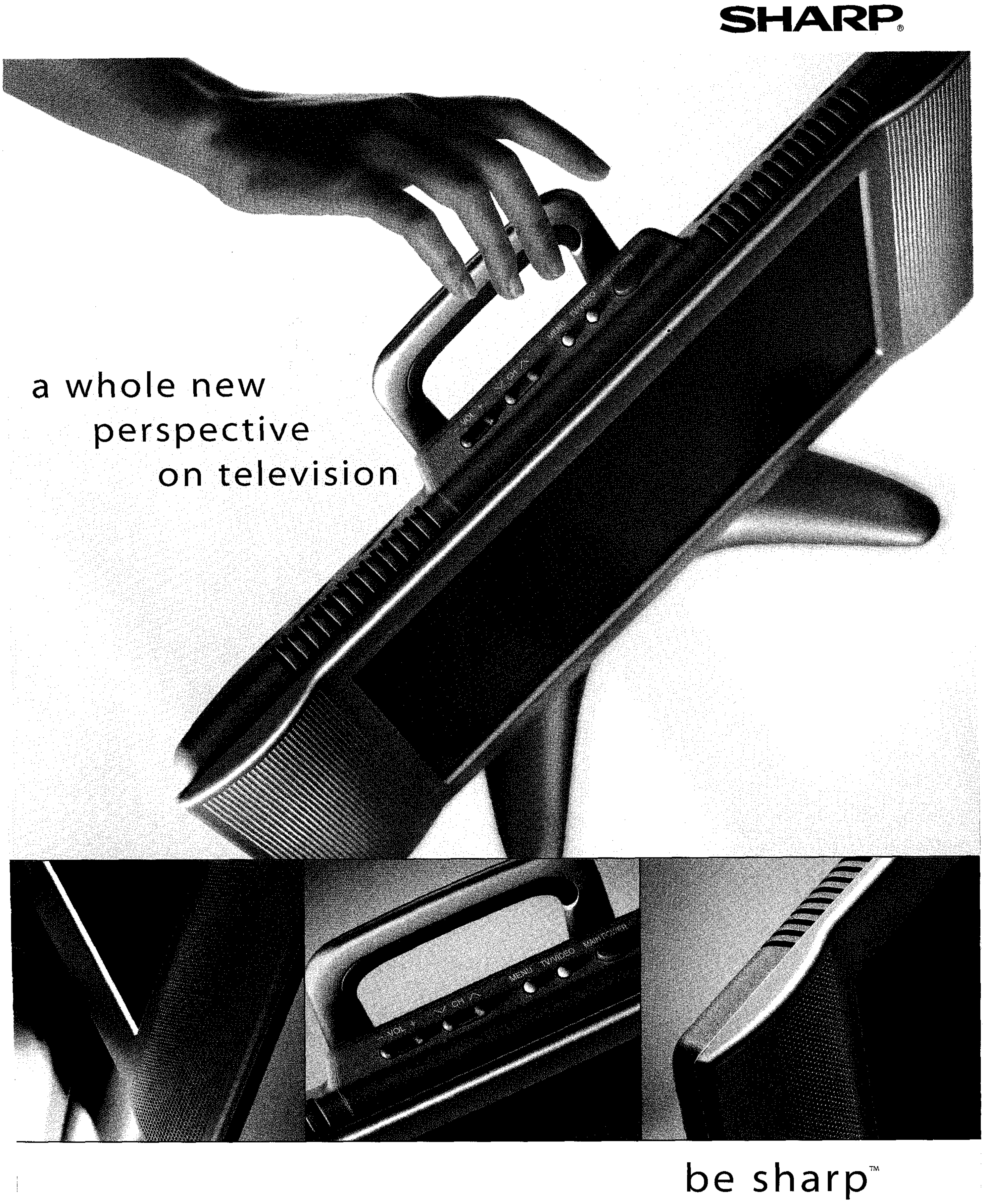
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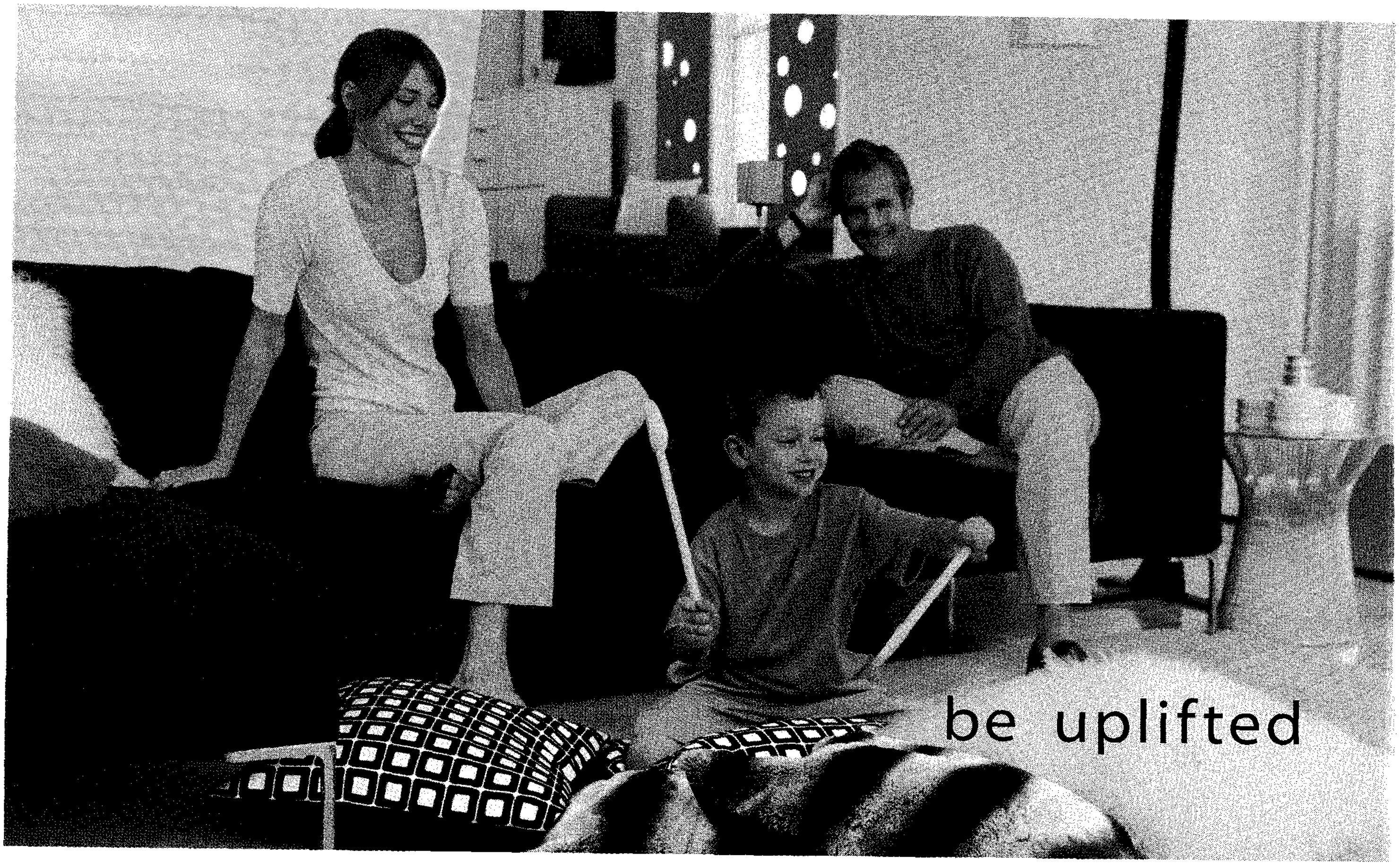

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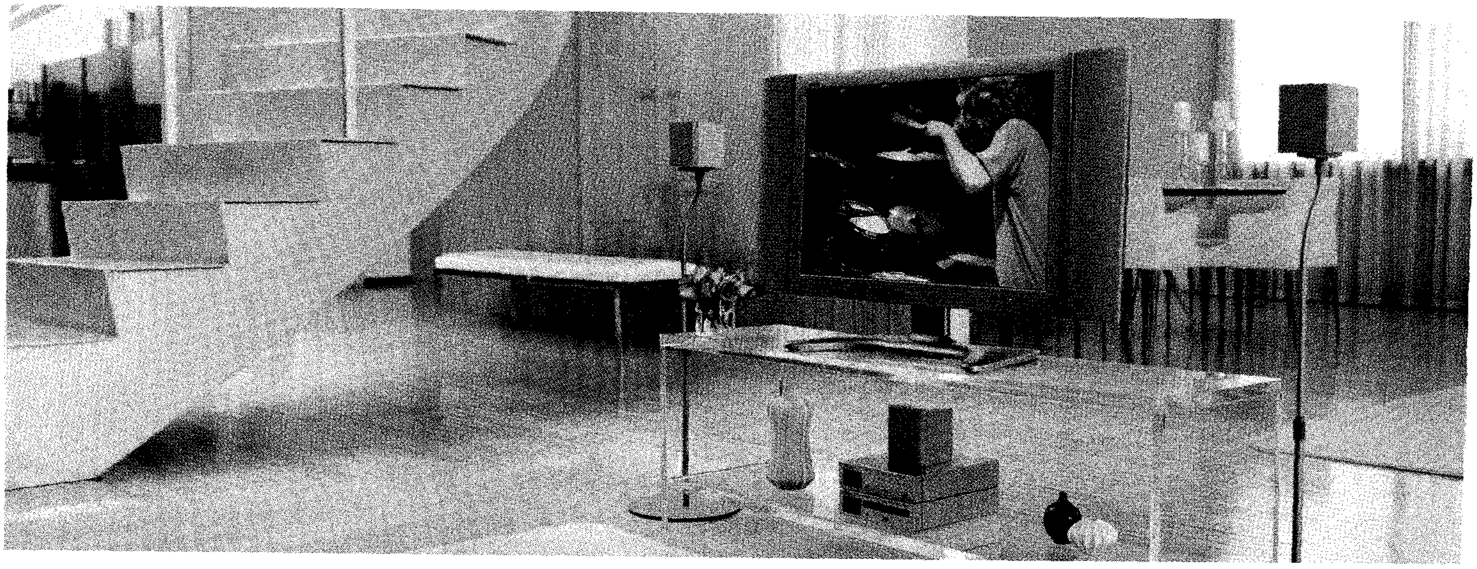

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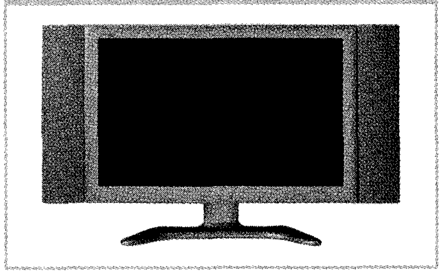

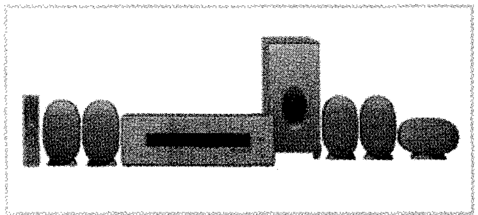

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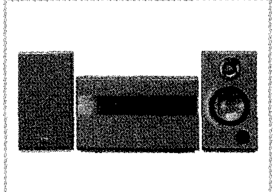

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David Foster Wallace

He won a National Magazine Award this year for "My Father's Brain," a piece about his father and Alzheimer's disease. A book of essays, "How to Be Alone," will appear in October.

7 P.M. New York Quarterly Meeting House
15 Rutherford Place

LATE SHIFT

Lorne Michaels and "Saturday Night Live" cast members talk with David Remnick

"Friday Night Live."

David Remnick will sit down with Lorne Michaels and several members of the current "Saturday Night Live" cast on the set at NBC Studios to discuss—and demonstrate—the process of making comedy week after week.

Lorne Michaels is the creator and executive producer of "Saturday Night Live," which has been on the air since the fall of 1975. He has produced numerous music and comedy-variety specials for television, as well as the Broadway show "Gilda Radner Live from New York." He is the executive producer of "Late Night with Conan O'Brien," and also produced the films "Wayne's World," "Tommy Boy," "Superstar," and, most recently, "Enigma."

David Remnick is the editor of *The New Yorker.*

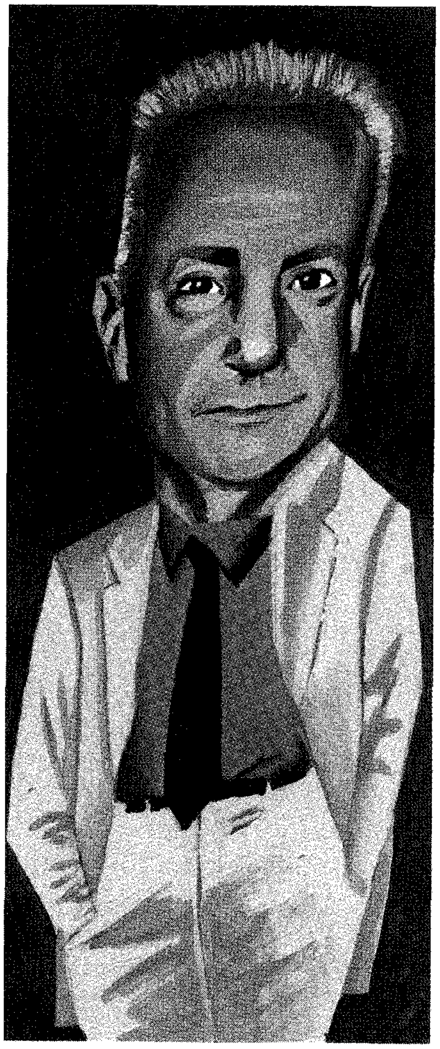
9 P.M. NBC Studios
30 Rockefeller Plaza

Aimee Mann talks with Ben Greenman

Aimee Mann, the singer and songwriter, began her career as the leader of the band 'Til Tuesday, which released the hit single "Voices Carry." Her solo career, which includes the albums "I'm with Stupid" and "Bachelor No. 2," began in 1993, with the release of "Whatever." She wrote and performed much of the soundtrack for the 1999 film "Magnolia," and one of her songs from that film, "Save Me," was nominated for an Oscar. Her most recent album is "Lost in Space."

Ben Greenman has been an editor at *The New Yorker* since 2000. "Superbad," a collection of his stories and humor pieces, some of which were originally published in the magazine, came out last year.

9:30 P.M. Union Square Ballroom
27 Union Square West



Lorne Michaels

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SATURDAY

SEPTEMBER 28, 2002

A day of panel discussions, talks, and interviews featuring New Yorker writers—on the subjects that interest them and with the people they've written about. There will also be several Late Shift evening events at night spots throughout the city. Tickets for daytime events are $15. Tickets for Late Shift events are $20.

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Oliver Sacks interviewed by Lawrence Weschler

Oliver Sacks is a clinical professor of neurology at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and the author of "Awakenings," "The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat," and "An Anthropologist on Mars," portions of which first appeared in *The New Yorker*. A memoir, "Uncle Tungsten: Memories of a Chemical Boyhood," came out last year. His "Oaxaca Journal" was published in March.

Lawrence Weschler contributed his first piece to *The New Yorker* in 1981. His books include "Mr. Wilson's Cabinet of Wonder" and "Robert Irwin's Garden at the Getty," which will be published in September. He is the director of the New York Institute for Humanities at New York University.

10 A.M. The Princeton Club,
James Madison Room
15 West 43rd Street

Seamus Heaney interviewed by David Remnick

Seamus Heaney won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1995. He has published a dozen poetry collections, three volumes of criticism, English translations of Sophocles and Janáček, and a verse translation of "Beowulf." His most recent collection, "Finders Keepers: Selected Prose 1971-2001," was published last spring.

David Remnick is the editor of *The New Yorker*.

10 A.M. Celeste Bartos Forum,
The New York Public Library
Entrance on 42nd Street between
Fifth and Sixth Avenues

Julie Taymor interviewed by Larissa MacFarquhar

Julie Taymor received two Tony Awards for her work on "The Lion King"—for best direction of a musical and for best original costume design. Her other honors include two Obies, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and a MacArthur Fellowship. She directed her first feature film, "Titus," in 1999; her most recent film, "Frida," about the artist Frida Kahlo, is due out in October. Taymor is now at work on an original opera, "Grendel," which will première in Los Angeles in 2005.

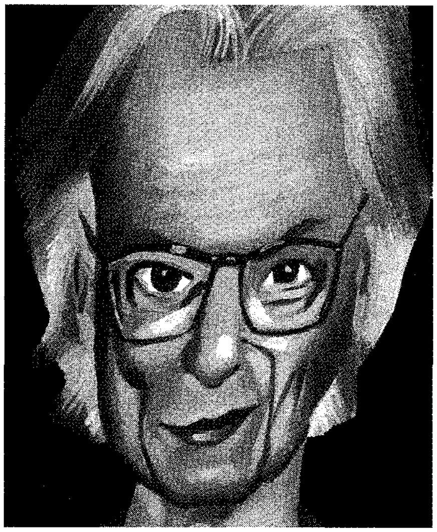
Julie Taymor

Larissa MacFarquhar, a *New Yorker* staff writer since 1998, has written on many subjects, including the movie producer Brian Grazer and the radical academic Stanley Fish.

1 P.M. Float
240 West 52nd Street

Richard Avedon interviewed by Adam Gopnik

Richard Avedon became *The New Yorker's* first staff photographer in 1992. His work has been widely published, and exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and other major institutions and galleries. Among his books are "In the American West," "Richard Avedon: Made in France," and "Evidence: 1944-1994." "Richard Avedon: Portraits" will accompany a retrospective of his work at the Metropolitan Museum of Art which opens on September 26th.



Richard Avedon

Adam Gopnik, a *New Yorker* staff writer, has been writing about art and culture since 1986. From 1995 to 1999, he wrote the Paris Journal for the magazine. Those essays, one of which won a National Magazine Award, were collected in his book "Paris to the Moon," which came out in 2000.
3:30 P.M. Directors Guild Theatre
110 West 57th Street

WRITERS AND THEIR SUBJECTS

John Lahr on Humor

Comedy and revenge.

John Lahr will discuss the relationship between comedy and the spirit of revenge, using examples from such comedians as Buster Keaton, Groucho Marx, Woody Allen, and the late Bill Hicks, the acerbic American standup comedian whom Lahr wrote about in 1993 for *The New Yorker*. Following the lecture, a short documentary on the last few months of Hicks's career will be shown.

John Lahr has been the senior drama critic at *The New Yorker* since 1992. He has published seventeen books on the theatre, two novels, and numerous stage adaptations that have been performed throughout England and the United States. He is also the co-creator of the Tony Award-winning Broadway show "Elaine Stritch at Liberty."
10:30 A.M. Float
240 West 52nd Street

Alex Ross and John Adams

Modern music master.

Alex Ross has been a *New Yorker* music critic since 1996. He is writing a book about twentieth-century composers.

John Adams's orchestral and choral work "On the Transmigration of Souls" was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic and will be performed in September to commemorate the anniversary of the terrorist attacks of last year. A recording of his symphony "Naïve and Sentimental Music" was released in the summer. His operas include "Nixon in China" and "The Death of Klinghoffer." In 2003, he will be Carnegie Hall's composer-in-residence.
10:30 A.M. The Princeton Club,
Prospect Lounge
15 West 43rd Street

Anthony Lane on Cinema

Sex and violence: the odd couple.

Anthony Lane became a film critic for *The New Yorker* in 1993. His essays won the National Magazine Award for Reviews and Criticism in 2001. His first book, "Nobody's Perfect: Selected Writings from *The New Yorker*," was published in August.
1 P.M. Times Square Studios
1500 Broadway at 44th Street

Bernard Lewis on History

Islam and the West.

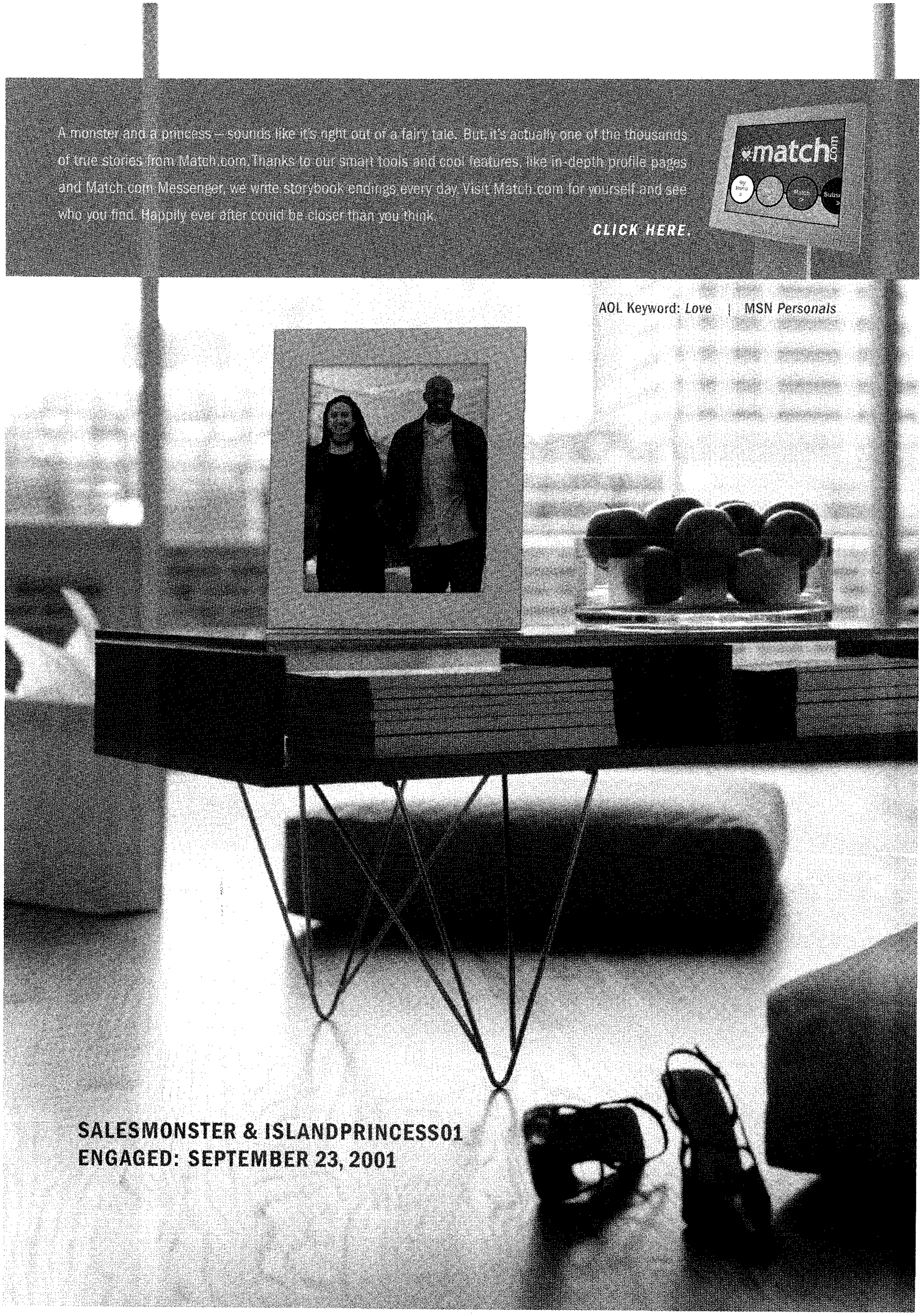
Bernard Lewis, the historian and Islamic scholar, is a professor emeritus at Princeton. He has written more than two dozen books on diverse subjects, including "The Assassins: A Radical Sect in Islam" and last year's "What Went Wrong?: Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response."
1 P.M. The Princeton Club,
Prospect Lounge
15 West 43rd Street

Al Sharpton

Elizabeth Kolbert and the Reverend Al Sharpton

The people's preacher.

Elizabeth Kolbert has been a staff writer at *The New Yorker* since 1999, reporting regularly on New York City politics. Her Profile



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of the Reverend Al Sharpton ran in February.

The Reverend Al Sharpton, a Brooklyn native, is one of America's leading advocates of racial equality and civil rights. He is the founder of the National Action Network and the author of "Go and Tell Pharaoh," an autobiography, and "Al on America," which will be published in October.

3 P.M. The Princeton Club,
James Madison Room
15 West 43rd Street

PANELS

Censorship and Creativity

What you can't say on television.

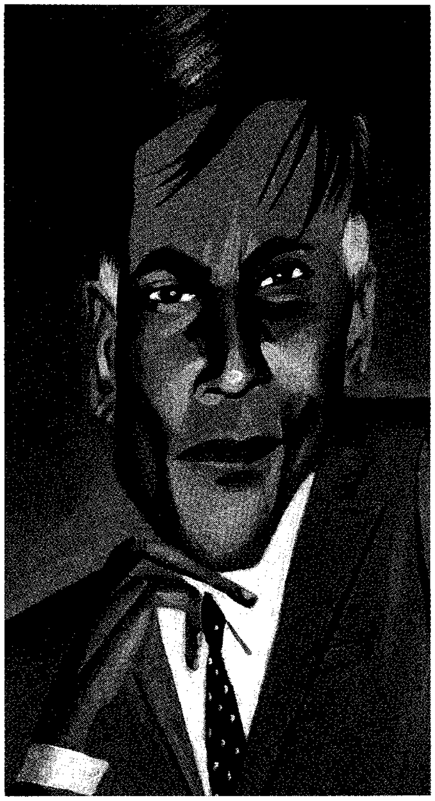
Tad Friend, moderator. With **Brian Graden**, **Susan Lyne**, **Trey Parker**, and **Aaron Sorkin**.

Tad Friend, a staff writer at *The New Yorker* since 1998, has written many articles on the entertainment industry. A collection of his essays, "Lost in Mongolia: Travels in Hollywood and Other Foreign Lands," was published in 2000.

Brian Graden is the president of entertainment at MTV, whose programs include "Total Request Live," "Cribs," "Diary," "Jackass," and "The Osbournes." Previously, he worked at Comedy Central, where he was the executive producer of "South Park."

Susan Lyne is the president of ABC Entertainment. As executive vice-president in charge of movies and miniseries there, she oversaw such projects as "Life with Judy Garland: Me and My Shadows" and "Oprah Winfrey Presents: Tuesdays with Morrie." She was the founding editor of *Premiere*.

Trey Parker is the co-creator and executive producer of Comedy Central's series "South Park" and "That's My Bush!" His feature-length film, "South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut," was nominated for an Academy Award for best original song in 1999.



Aaron Sorkin

Aaron Sorkin is the creator and executive producer of the television series "SportsNight" and "The West Wing," which has won seventeen Emmys. He is also a playwright and screenwriter; among his films are "The American President," "Malice," and "A Few Good Men," which was nominated for four Academy Awards and five Golden Globe Awards.

10:30 A.M. Times Square Studios
1500 Broadway at 44th Street

Biorevolution

Cloning and the future of healing.

Michael Specter, moderator. With **Arthur Caplan**, **Francis Fukuyama**, and **Rudolf Jaenisch.**

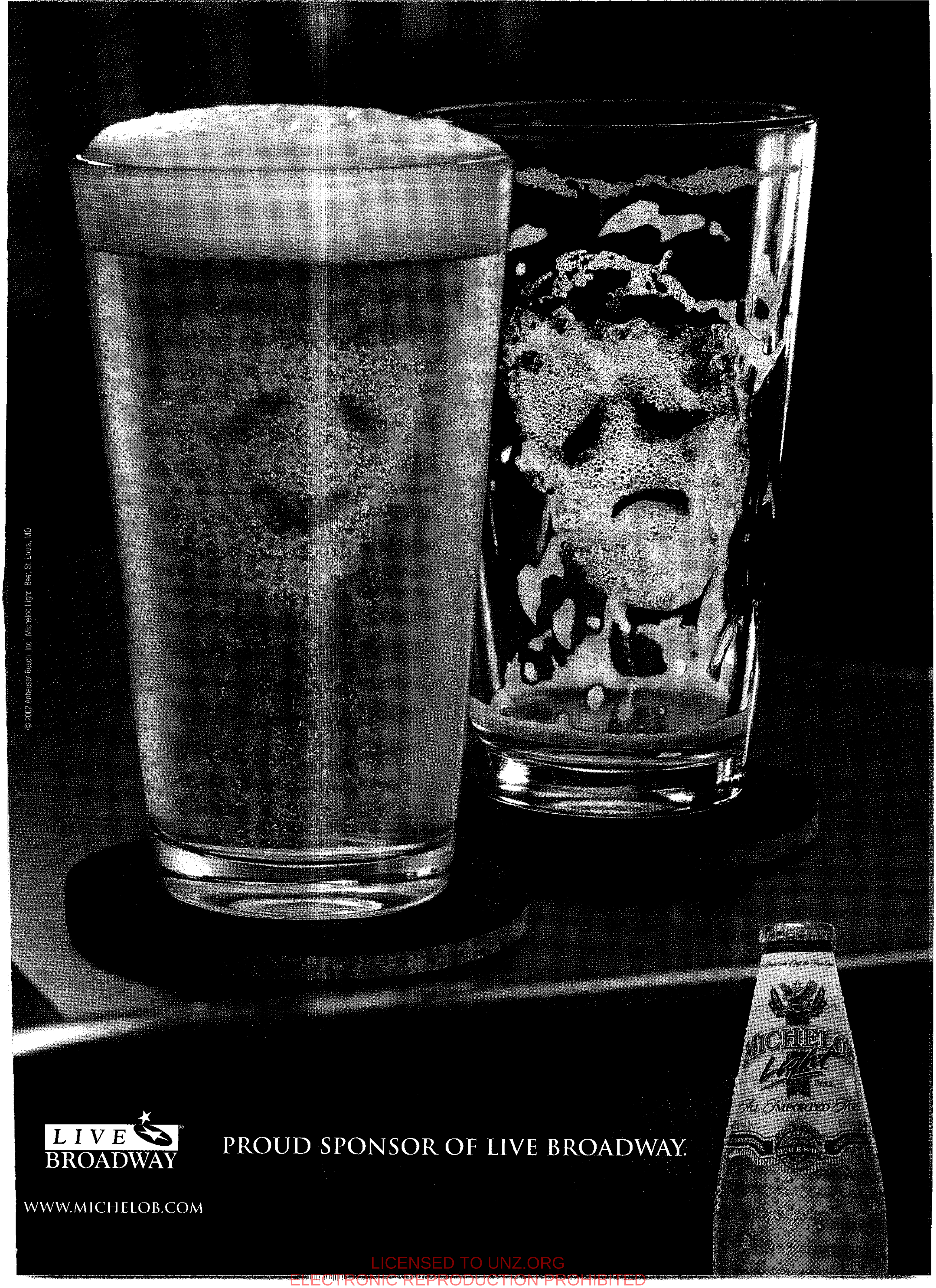
Michael Specter has been a staff writer at *The New Yorker* since 1998 and writes frequently about science and technology, covering such topics as fingerprinting and the spread of AIDS in India. He recently wrote a Profile of Lance Armstrong.

Arthur Caplan is a professor of molecular and cellular engineering and the director of the Center for Bioethics at the University of Pennsylvania. He is the author or editor of more than twenty books, and served as the chairman of the Advisory Committee of the Department of Health and Human Services from 1997 to 2001.

Francis Fukuyama is the author of several books, among them "The End of History and the Last Man" and "Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution." He is the Bernard Schwartz Professor of International Political Economy at Johns Hopkins University, and was recently appointed to President Bush's advisory council on embryonic-stem-cell research, assisted reproduction, and human cloning.

Rudolf Jaenisch is one of the founders of transgenetic science and has contributed to the development of cloning technology. He has done extensive research on cancers and various neurological diseases, and in 1996 was awarded the Boehringer Mannheim Molecular Bioanalytics Prize.

12:30 P.M. The Princeton Club,
James Madison Room
15 West 43rd Street



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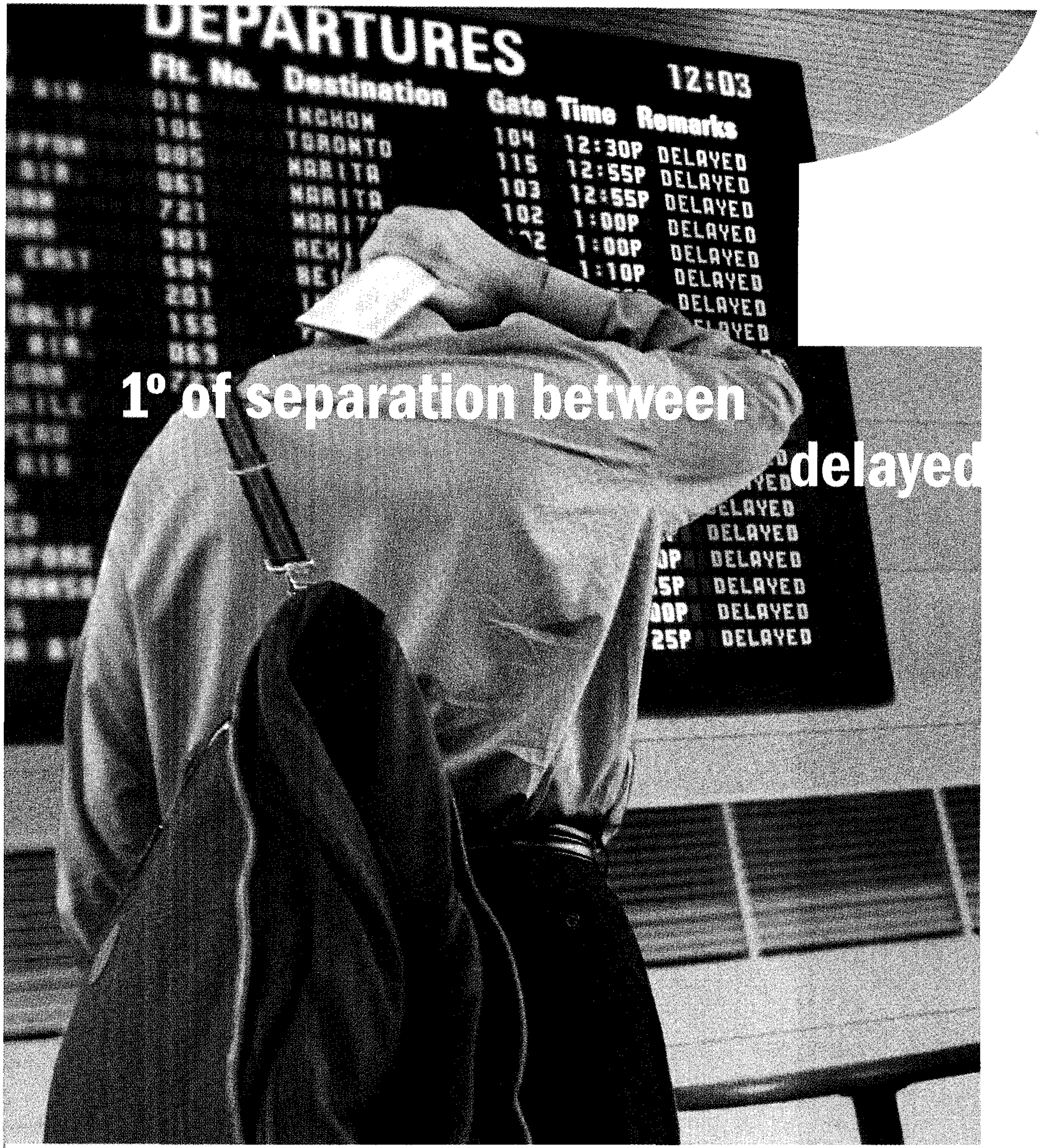

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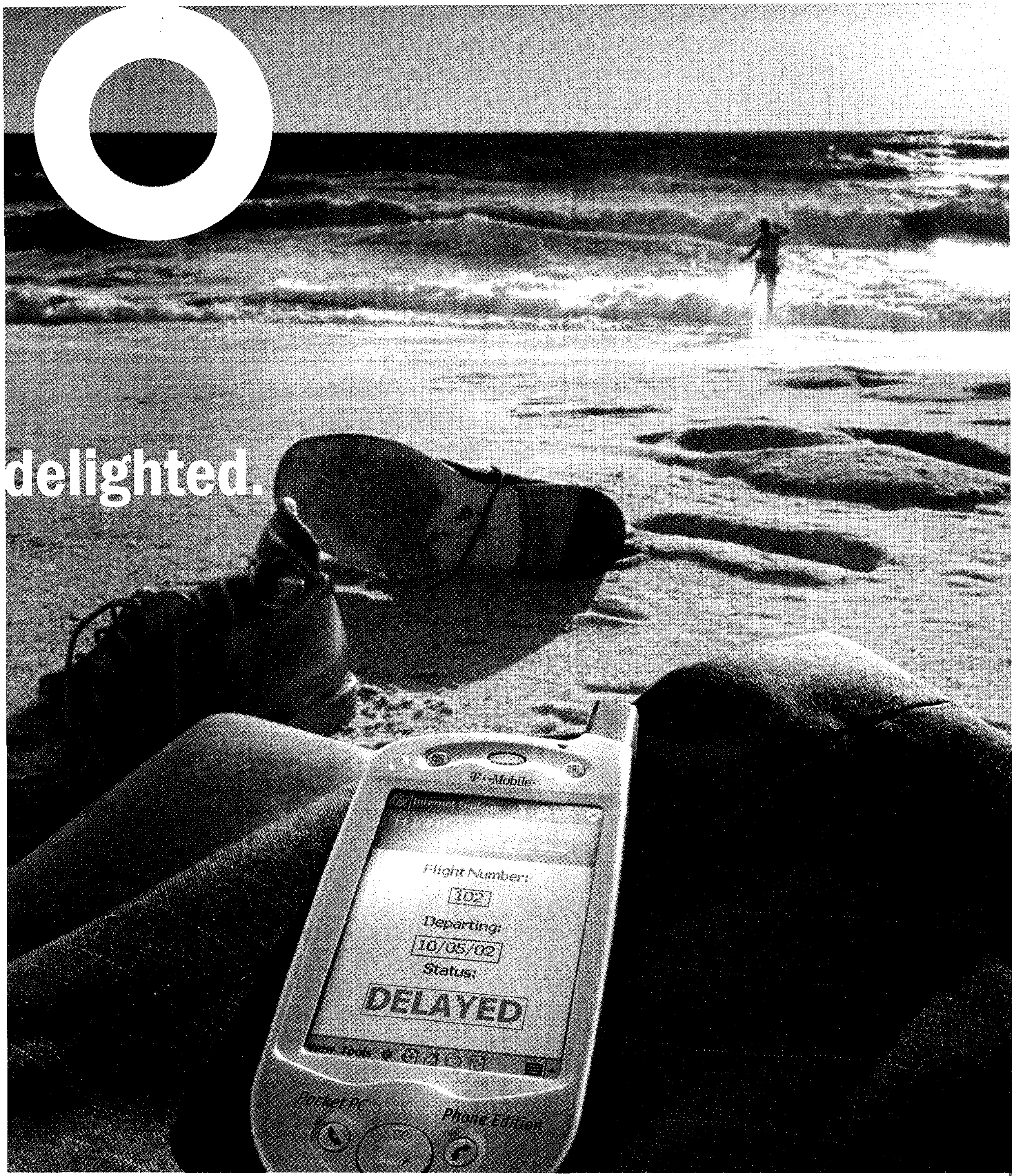
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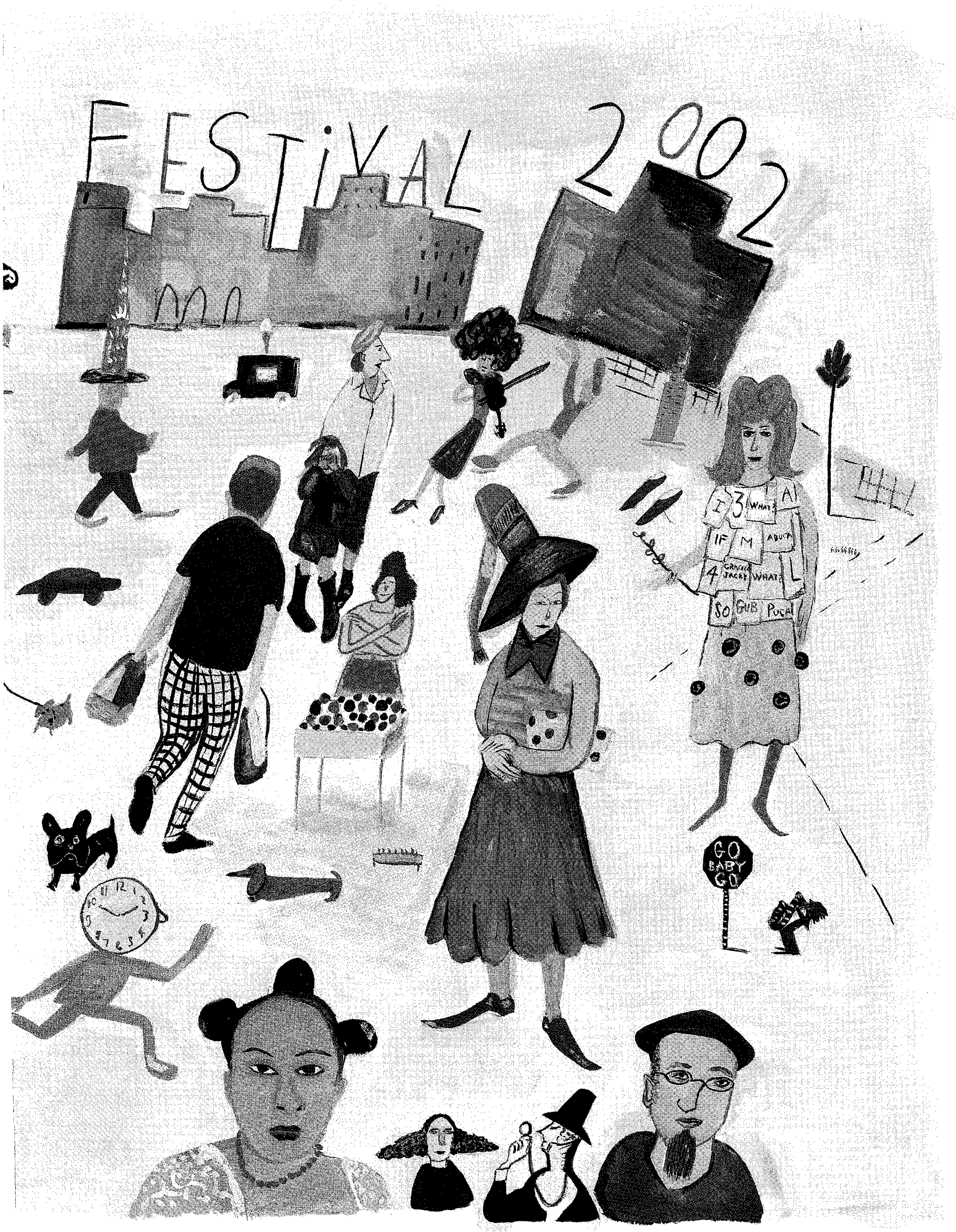
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SATURDAY

SEPTEMBER 28, 2002

A Monster in the House

Writing about family.

Bill Buford, moderator. With **Martin Amis**, **Roddy Doyle**, **Dave Eggers**, and **Amy Tan**.

Bill Buford is *The New Yorker's* fiction and literary editor. He is the author of "Among the Thugs," a book about British soccer-fan violence.

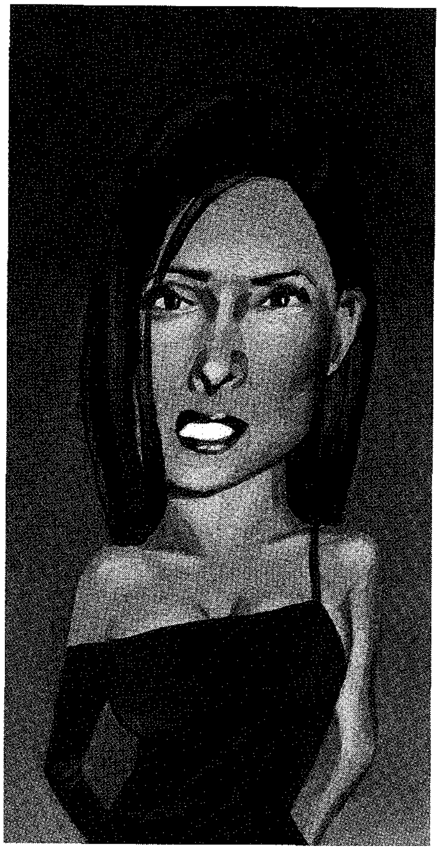
Martin Amis is the author of ten novels, among them "London Fields," and a short-story collection. His memoir "Experience," in part about the complexities of his relationship with his father, the novelist Kingsley Amis, came out in 2000. His most recent book, "Koba the Dread: Laughter and the Twenty Million," was published in the spring.

Roddy Doyle's novel "Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha" is about the adventures of an adolescent boy growing up in the Barrytown neighborhood in Dublin, against the backdrop of his parents' failing marriage. It won the Booker Prize in 1993.

Dave Eggers is the author of "A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius," which recounts his experiences raising his younger brother after the death of both of their parents from cancer.

Amy Tan's novels include "The Hundred Secret Senses," "The Bonesetter's Daughter," and "The Kitchen God's Wife." Her best-selling novel "The Joy Luck Club," which was a National Book Award finalist, was in part about the complicated relationships between four Chinese women and their daughters. She is currently at work on a new novel.

1 P.M. Directors Guild Theatre
110 West 57th Street



Salma Hayek

My Day Job

Multi-tasking in the movies.

Susan Morrison, moderator. With **Salma Hayek**, **Jennifer Jason Leigh**, and **Tim Blake Nelson**.

Susan Morrison is the articles editor of *The New Yorker.*

Salma Hayek's film credits include "Desperado" and "From Dusk till Dawn." She starred in and co-produced "In the Time of the Butterflies," which was broadcast on Showtime, and she will play the artist Frida Kahlo in the upcoming film "Frida," which she co-produced.

Jennifer Jason Leigh has been in more than thirty films, the most recent being "Road to Perdition," and numerous stage productions, including "Cabaret" and the Pulitzer Prize-winning play "Proof." She also produced the films "Georgia," which she starred in, and "The Anniversary Party," which she starred in, co-wrote, and co-directed with Alan Cumming.

Tim Blake Nelson is an actor, writer, and director. He has appeared onscreen in Joel and Ethan Coen's "O Brother, Where Art Thou?," Steven Spielberg's "Minority Report," and Miguel Arteta's "The Good Girl." He has written and produced several plays and films, including "The Foreign Affair." He wrote, directed, co-produced, and co-edited the film "The Grey Zone," based on his play of the same name, which will be released this fall.

3:30 P.M. Times Square Studios
1500 Broadway at 44th Street

The Next War

Where we will fight, and how.

Richard C. Holbrooke, moderator. With **Jeffrey Goldberg**, **Seymour M. Hersh**, **Isabel Hilton**, and **Lawrence Wright**.

Richard C. Holbrooke was the United States Ambassador to the United Nations from 1999 to 2001. Previously, as Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs, he was a chief negotiator at the Dayton Peace Accords, which ended the war in Bosnia in 1995. He has also worked as a journalist and an editor. His book "To End a War" is about his experiences during the Dayton Accords.

Jeffrey Goldberg has been a staff writer at *The New Yorker* since 2000, specializing in foreign reporting with an emphasis on Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. He recently wrote for the magazine about the use of chemical and biological weapons against the Kurds in northern Iraq. His new book, "Prisoners," about the Middle East, will be published next year.

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SATURDAY

SEPTEMBER 28, 2002

Seymour M. Hersh has written for *The New Yorker* since 1971. He is the author of several books, among them "The Price of Power: Kissinger in the Nixon White House," which won a National Books Critics Circle Award. He won a Pulitzer Prize for his reporting on the My Lai massacre.

Isabel Hilton, a staff writer at *The New Yorker*, has covered events in France, Germany, the Middle East, South America, Japan, China, and Hong Kong. Her most recent article for the magazine, about Pervez Musharraf's stewardship of Pakistan, ran this summer. She is the author of "The Search for the Panchen Lama."

Lawrence Wright's recent contributions to *The New Yorker* include a Profile of the late F.B.I. counter-terrorism expert John O'Neill. He is also the author of "Remembering Satan," portions of which first appeared in the magazine and won the 1993 National Magazine Award for Reporting. He is writing a book about September 11th, focussing on events leading up to the attacks.

3:30 P.M. The Princeton Club,
Prospect Lounge
15 West 43rd Street

LATE SHIFT

Eddie Izzard talks with John Lahr

Eddie Izzard is an actor and a comedian known on both sides of the Atlantic for his dramatic and comedic virtuosity. He presented the first of his six one-man shows, "Live at the Ambassadors," in London in 1993, and his show "Dress to Kill" won two Emmy Awards in 2000. Most recently, he played Charlie Chaplin in the Peter Bogdanovich film "The Cat's Meow."

Eddie Izzard

John Lahr has been the senior drama critic at *The New Yorker* since 1992.

9 P.M. Bowery Ballroom
6 Delancey Street

Kevin Smith talks with Michael Agger

Kevin Smith's independent début, "Clerks," won the Filmmaker's Trophy at the Sundance Film Festival and a critics' award at Cannes. He received an Independent Spirit Award for his film "Chasing Amy." Among his other films are "Dogma," "Mallrats," and "Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back." He is currently directing "Jersey Girl," which he wrote.

Michael Agger is an editor and film critic for *The New Yorker's* Goings On About Town.

9 P.M. Tribeca Film Center
375 Greenwich Street

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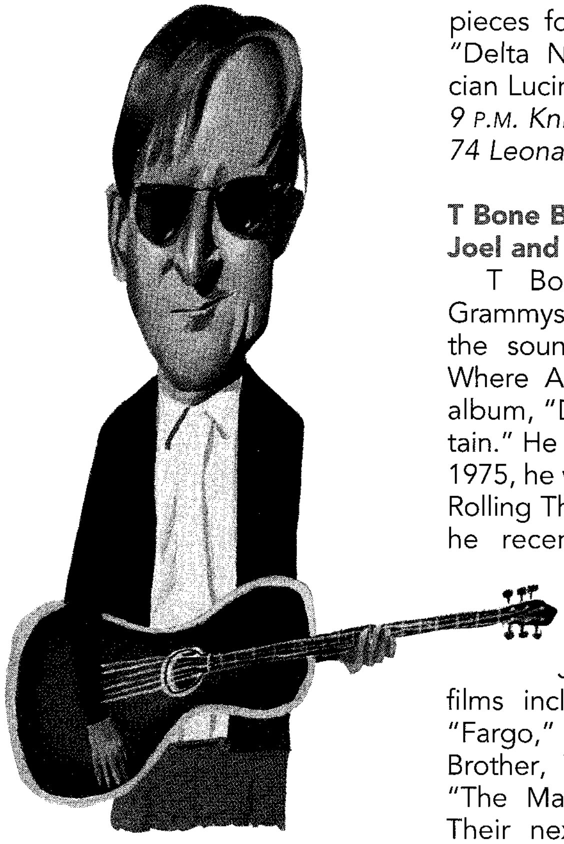
SATURDAY

SEPTEMBER 28, 2002



T Bone Burnett

David Byrne talks with Bill Buford

David Byrne's solo work includes art performances, world-music projects, and a number of theatrical and film scores (he collaborated on the Academy Award-winning music for Bernardo Bertolucci's "The Last Emperor"). He was one of the founders of the New Wave band Talking Heads, and he started his own world-music record label, Luaka Bop, in 1988. His most recent solo album, "Look Into the Eyeball," was released last year.

Bill Buford is *The New Yorker's* fiction and literary editor. His pieces for the magazine include "Delta Nights," about the musician Lucinda Williams.

9 P.M. Knitting Factory
74 Leonard Street

T Bone Burnett talks with Joel and Ethan Coen

T Bone Burnett won four Grammys this year for producing the soundtrack for "O Brother, Where Art Thou?" and its sister album, "Down from the Mountain." He is a performer as well—in 1975, he was a part of Bob Dylan's Rolling Thunder Review tour—and he recently finished recording his first new album of original songs in nearly a decade.

Joel and Ethan Coen's films include "Raising Arizona," "Fargo," "The Big Lebowski," "O Brother, Where Art Thou?," and "The Man Who Wasn't There." Their next project, "Intolerable Cruelty," is scheduled for release next year.

9 P.M. Directors Guild Theatre
110 West 57th Street

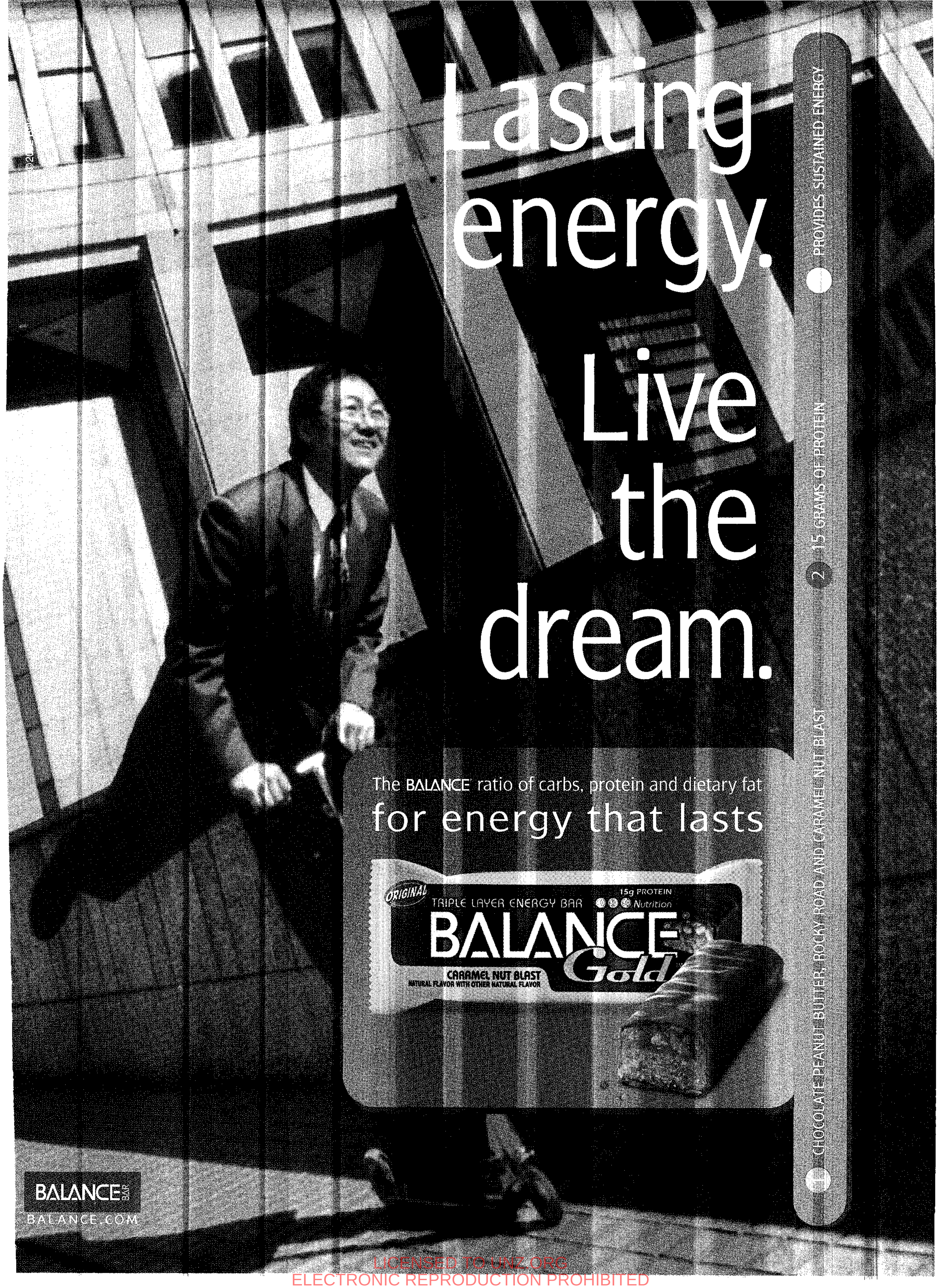
Ice Cube talks with Ben Greenman

Ice Cube was a founding member of the West Coast gangsta-rap group N.W.A. His albums include "AmeriKKKa's Most Wanted," "Death Certificate," and "The Predator." He made his acting début in the 1991 film "Boyz N the Hood" and has appeared in the films "Three Kings," "The Glass Shield," and "Friday," which he also produced and co-wrote. His most recent film, "Barbershop," will be released in the fall.

Ben Greenman is an editor at *The New Yorker*. His story collection, "Superbad," was published last year.

9 P.M. Float
240 West 52nd Street

Ice Cube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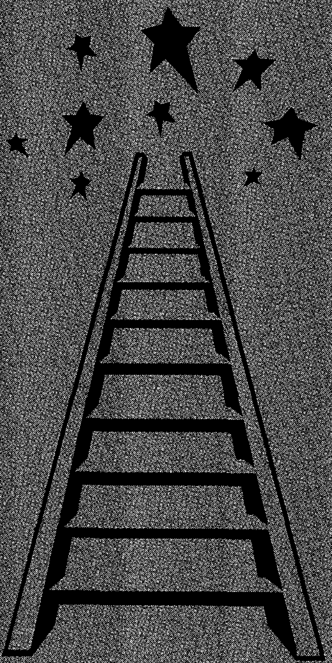

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SUNDAY

SEPTEMBER 29, 2002

Sunday's programs include About Town excursions to unusual corners of the city, a free Cartoon Laugh-In with New Yorker cartoonists, and a tribute to the poet Elizabeth Bishop. Ticket prices for About Town events vary and are listed in the program notes; starting points for the excursions will be indicated on the tickets. Tickets for the Elizabeth Bishop event are $15.

ABOUT TOWN

Private Viewing

Simon Schama will escort thirty guests through the Metropolitan Museum of Art, before the museum opens, for a close look at three paintings—"Aristotle Contemplating the Bust of Homer," by Rembrandt; "The Death of Socrates," by David; and "Young Women from the Village," by Courbet—all of which reveal, in their subject matter and form, the way their creators thought about power, patronage, and painting itself. A breakfast will follow.

Simon Schama has written for *The New Yorker* since 1995. His essays on Mondrian, Rembrandt, and the "Haute Couture" show at the Metropolitan Museum won the National Magazine Award for Essays and Criticism in 1996. The concluding episodes of his television program "A History of Britain" will air in November; "The Fate of Empire 1776-2002," the third volume in the related book series, will come out shortly thereafter. He is a University Professor at Columbia.

9 to 10:30 A.M. $50 (includes admission to the museum)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art
1000 Fifth Avenue at 82nd Street

Exhibit A: DNA

Jeffrey Toobin and **Barry C. Scheck** will take a small group to visit **Robert C. Shaler** at one of the city's criminal-forensics laboratories.

Jeffrey Toobin has been a staff writer for *The New Yorker* since 1993, and has written about a variety of legal and political issues and subjects, including Kenneth Starr's investigation of President Clinton, the trial of O. J. Simpson, and Attorney General John Ashcroft. He is the author of four books, the most recent being "Too Close to Call: The 36-Day Battle to Decide the 2000 Election." He is the legal analyst for CNN.

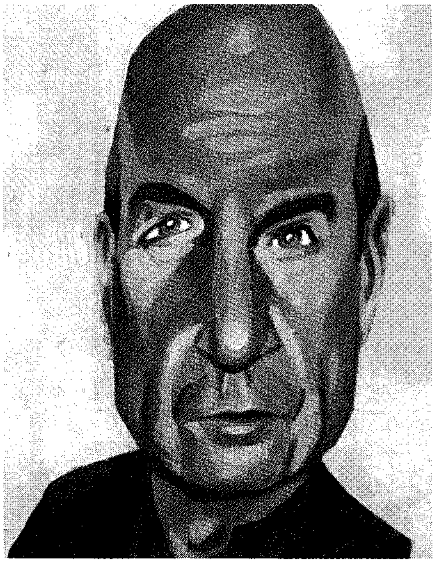
Barry C. Scheck is a lawyer who has represented O. J. Simpson, Louise Woodward, and Abner Louima, among others. He is the co-founder and co-director of the Innocence Project, at Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, which has helped to exonerate more than a hundred men through post-conviction DNA testing. He sits on the New York Forensic Science Review Board, which oversees the state's crime and forensic DNA labs.

Robert C. Shaler is the city medical examiner's chief of forensic biology. He is the director of the lab where for most of the past year technicians have been working to

identify and match human remains from the World Trade Center disaster—the largest forensic investigation in United States history.
10 to 11:30 A.M. $25

Come Hungry

Calvin Trillin will lead an off-the-eaten-path tour from the southern end of Greenwich Village and into SoHo and Little Italy, stopping for snacks along the way. The tour will end in Chinatown with a meal at a dim-sum parlor.



Calvin Trillin

Calvin Trillin has been a staff writer since 1963 and has contributed more than three hundred pieces to the magazine, including many articles for the U.S. Journal and American Chronicles departments. He writes frequently about food, and is the author of twenty-one books, among them "American Fried," "Alice, Let's Eat," and "Third Helpings." His latest book is "Tepper Isn't Going Out."
11 A.M. to 1 P.M. $50

Left Bank Brunch

Meghan O'Rourke, an editor at *The New Yorker*, will host a brunch to discuss the cultural life of Brooklyn and the changes it has undergone for the many writers who live and work there. With **Paul Auster**, **Paula Fox**, **Jonathan Lethem**, and **Marc Nesbitt**.

Paul Auster has published nine novels, including three known as the New York Trilogy ("City of Glass," "Ghosts," and "The Locked Room") and "The Book of Illusions," which is out in September. He has also written three books of essays and three screenplays, including "Smoke" and "Lulu on the Bridge."

Paula Fox's memoir, "Borrowed Finery," was published in 2001. She is the author of six novels and twenty-two books for children, and received the Hans Christian Andersen Medal in 1978 for her contribution to children's literature.

Jonathan Lethem's 1999 novel, "Motherless Brooklyn," won a National Book Critics Circle Award. He has also published a story collection, "The Wall of the Sky, the Wall of the Eye."

Marc Nesbitt published his first story in *The New Yorker* in 2001.

Sleepless is **Peter Wolf**'s return to the sound of the soul & blues records that he spun as one of the first freeform radio DJs. Best known as leader of the J. Geils Band, Wolf has returned with his most personal and introspective set to date, paying homage to a multitude of legends including Tennessee Williams, John Lee Hooker, and the Drifters. Guests on Sleepless include Mick Jagger, Keith Richards and Steve Earle.

A survivor, **Graham Nash**'s, groundbreaking career has brought him international fame as co-founder of The Hollies and Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young. **Songs for Survivors** is the legendary songwriter's first solo record in a dozen years.

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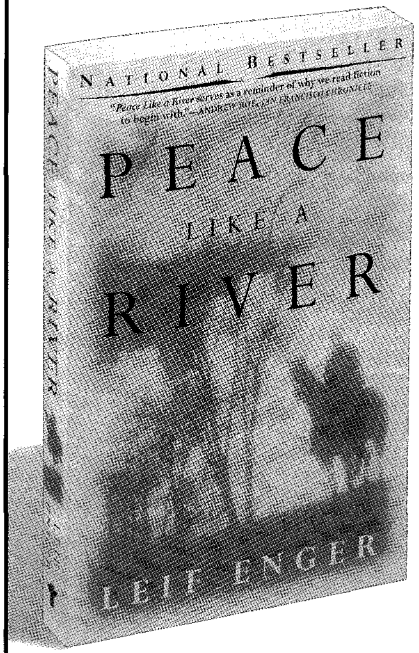
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—*The Christian Science Monitor*

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SUNDAY | SEPTEMBER 29, 2002 |

His collection of stories, "Gigantic," was published this spring.
11 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. $40
Bargemusic
Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn

Manhattan Unfurled

Paul Goldberger and **Matteo Pericoli** will discuss Manhattan's ever-changing skyline during a ferry ride around the island. Brunch will be served on board.

Paul Goldberger has been the architecture critic for *The New Yorker* since 1997. He won a Pulitzer Prize in 1984 and also received the Preservation Achievement Award, given by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission.

Matteo Pericoli, an architect and illustrator, graduated from Milan's Polytechnic School of Architecture. He was the project architect for Richard Meier's "Church of the Year 2000," in Rome, and has contributed illustrations to *The New Yorker* since 1996. Pericoli's book "Manhattan Unfurled," published last year, contains a sixteen-foot-long folded drawing of the island's East and West Sides. Paul Goldberger wrote the accompanying essay.
11 A.M. to 1 P.M. $50

Take the A(rt) Train

Thelma Golden will lead a group by bus through Harlem and into the studios of up-and-coming and established artists. The tour will conclude with a brunch at the Studio Museum in Harlem.

Thelma Golden is the chief curator at the Studio Museum in Harlem, which is dedicated to promoting African-American art and artists. She was formerly a curator at the Whitney Museum of American Art.
11 A.M. to 2 P.M. $50 (includes admission to the museum)

Funny Drawings for Funny Kids

The New Yorker's cover editor, **Françoise Mouly**, with the artists **Harry Bliss**, **Maira Kalman**, and **Art Spiegelman**, will guide children in exploring their creative side at the Museum of Modern Art's temporary home in Queens.

Harry Bliss will work with kids on their own back-to-school-themed *New Yorker* covers. He is a cartoonist and staff artist at *The New Yorker*, and an illustrator of children's books, most recently "And God Cried, Too: A Kid's Book of Healing and Hope."

Maira Kalman, who will help kids paint portraits of one another, has contributed eight covers to the magazine. She has written and illustrated many children's books, including "Fireboat: The Heroic Adventures of John J. Harvey," which came out in August.

Art Spiegelman, with his son and daughter, will act out scenes from various stories in "Little Lit," an anthology of comic-strip stories for kids, as they are projected on a screen. Spiegelman is the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of "Maus" and has been a staff artist at *The New Yorker* since 1993.
2:30 to 5 P.M. $25 (includes admission to the museum)
MoMA QNS / The Museum of Modern Art, Queens
33rd Street at Queens Boulevard, Long Island City
Note: This event is for children between the ages of six and twelve. Each child may be accompanied by up to two adults.

CARTOON LAUGH-IN

The New Yorker's cartoon editor, **Bob Mankoff**, will discuss cartooning and the comic arts with four of the most distinctive pens in the business: **Roz Chast**, **Alex Gregory**, **Ed Koren**, and **David Sipress**.

Roz Chast has been a staff artist for *The New Yorker* since 1979. She has contributed more than five hundred cartoons and covers, which have been collected in books including "Proof of Life on Earth" and "The Four Elements." "Weird and Wonderful Words," which she illustrated, is due out in October.

Alex Gregory has been cartooning for *The New Yorker* since 1999. He has also been a writer for the television programs "The Late Show with David Letterman," "Frasier," and "The Larry Sanders Show."

Ed Koren published his first cartoon in *The New Yorker* in 1962. He has gone on to contribute more than seven hundred others, and twenty-four covers. His books include "Quality Time: Parenting, Progeny, and Pets" and a number of children's books. He also illustrated the best-selling "A Dog's Life," by Peter Mayle.

David Sipress has contributed cartoons to *The New Yorker* since 1998. He is the author of eight books, including "It's a Dad's Life," "Sex, Love, and Other Problems," and, most recently, "It's a Teacher's Life."

10 to 11:30 A.M. Free.
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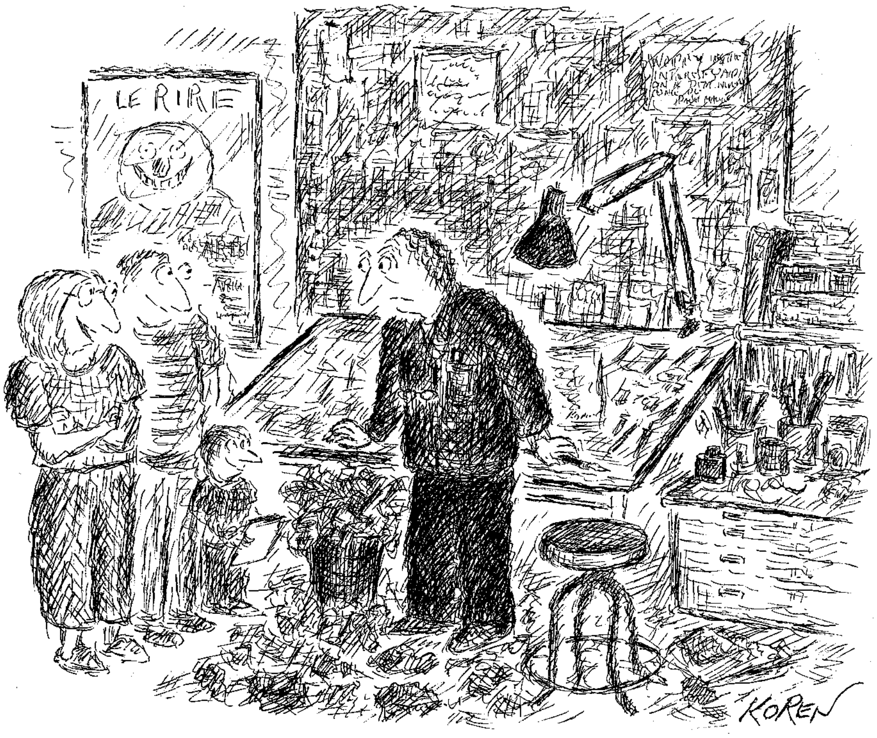

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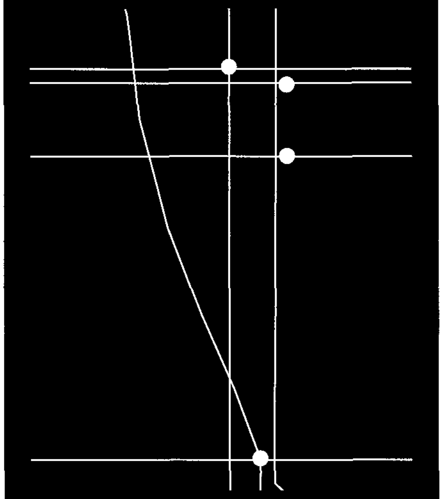

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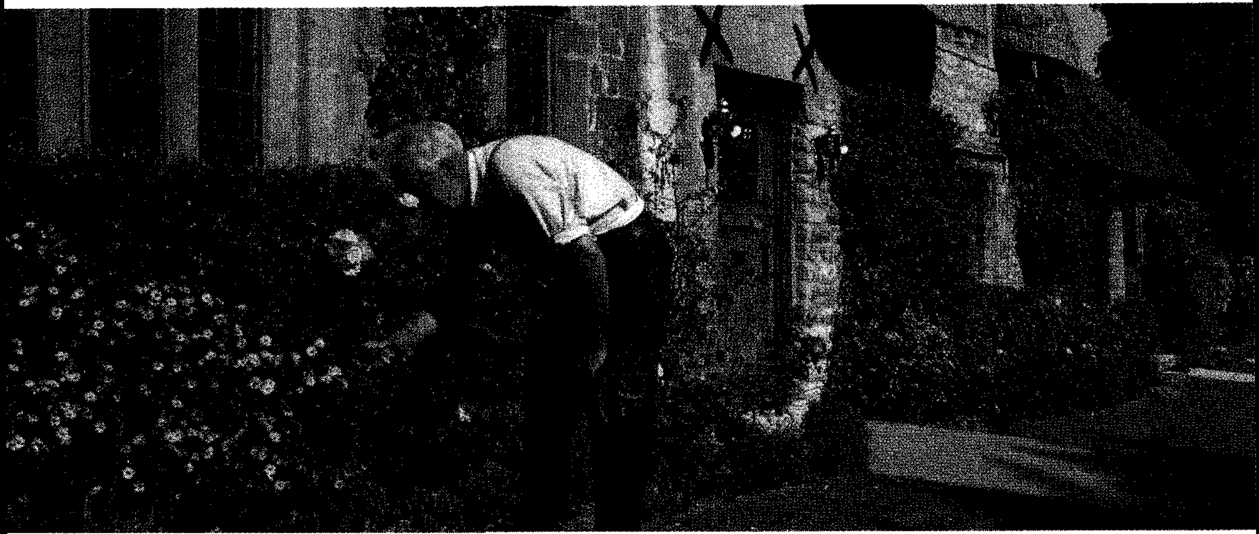

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AN AFTERNOON WITH ELIZABETH BISHOP

When John Ashbery called Elizabeth Bishop "a writer's writer's writer," he summoned up both the poet's aloofness and the depth of her appeal. Not especially prolific—her reputation rests on five volumes of poems—Bishop continues to be revered by poets and readers more than twenty years after her death, in 1979. "I never really sat down and said to myself, 'I'm going to be a poet.' Never in my life. I'm still surprised that people think I am," she modestly told an interviewer. "There's nothing more embarrassing than being a poet, really."

At that point, Bishop had won a Pulitzer Prize, a National Book Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and numerous other honors. Her evasion may have been a manifestation of her famous shyness, or of an ironic contrariness, or it may have reflected the wide range of her interests outside poetry—she painted beautiful watercolors, wrote several thousand letters, was an accomplished short-story writer and translator, and had many great friendships.

Bishop's genius for description earned her a reputation as a poet of surfaces, even as a miniaturist. She concentrated intensely on the physical world—on its particulars and also on broader cartographic themes. (Her first collection, "North & South," was followed by "Questions of Travel" and "Geography III.") Focussing on the local and the immediate allowed Bishop a means of psychological exploration. Her poem "Arrival at Santos" concludes with the famous line "we are driving to the interior." No one has described Bishop's own enterprise more accurately.

In AN AFTERNOON WITH ELIZABETH BISHOP, a group of poets, musicians, editors, and scholars—Bishop's friends, colleagues, students, and admirers—will gather to celebrate her singular gifts.

James Fenton is a poet, journalist, and art critic.

Robert Giroux is a retired partner at the publishing house Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

Jorie Graham is the Boylston Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory at Harvard.

Seamus Heaney is the Ralph Waldo Emerson Poet in Residence at Harvard.

Scott Murphree teaches voice at the University of Connecticut.

Robert Pinsky teaches in the creative-writing program at Boston University.

Katha Pollitt is a poet and a political columnist for *The Nation.*

Alice Quinn is the poetry editor of *The New Yorker.*

Ned Rorem is a composer and the author of sixteen books.

Vijay Seshadri teaches in the creative-writing department at Sarah Lawrence College.

Elizabeth Spires teaches writing at Goucher College.

Ilán Stavans is the Lewis-Sebring Professor in Latin American and Latino Culture at Amherst College.

Helen Vendler is the A. Kingsley Porter University Professor at Harvard.

4 P.M. Town Hall
123 West 43rd Street

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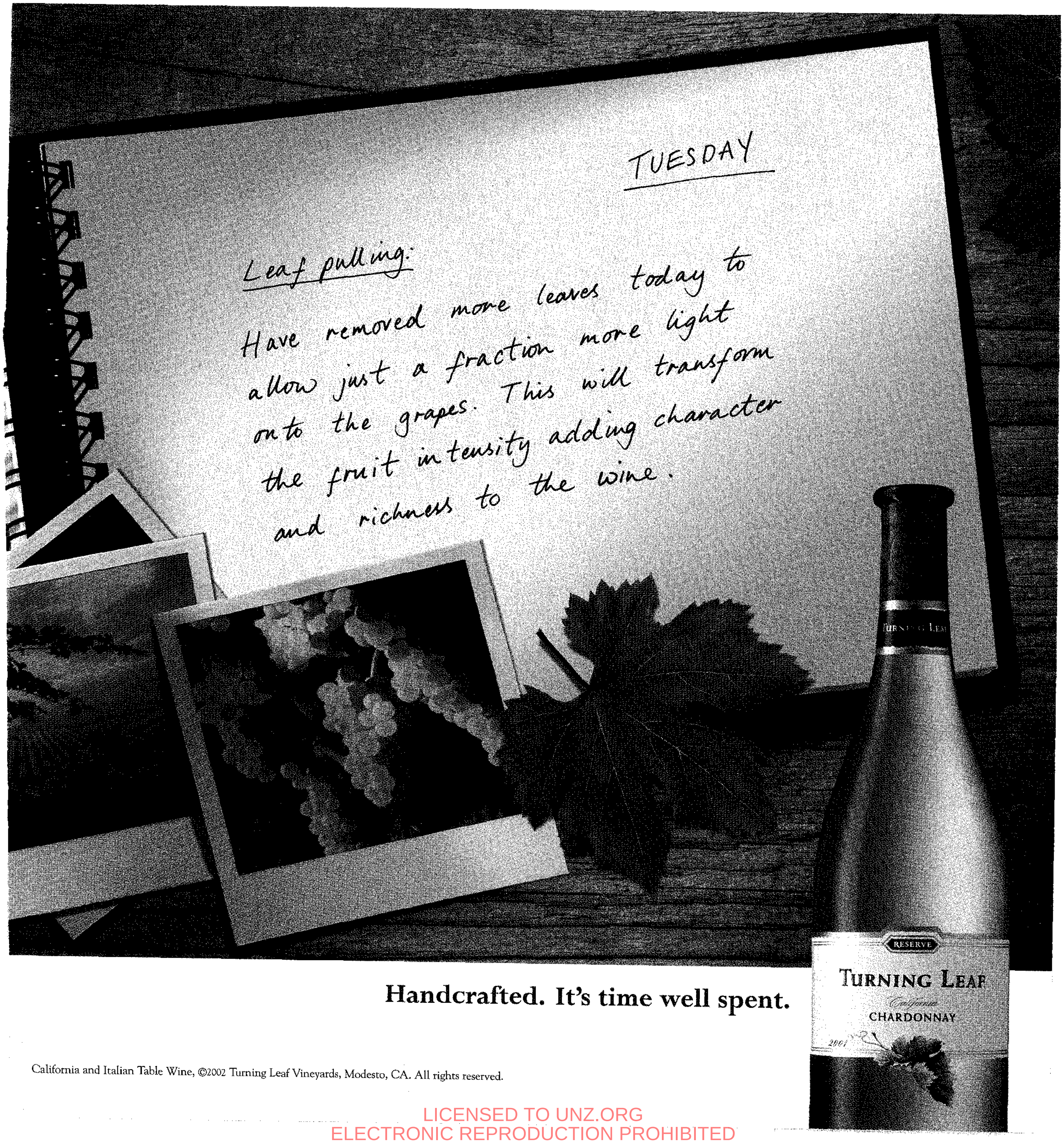
that make the difference.



TUESDAY

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HEADQUARTERS 2002

The New Yorker Festival headquarters is at the Union Square Barnes & Noble Booksellers, 33 East 17th Street. There you can find additional information on Festival programs. You may also purchase books by New Yorker and Festival contributors. The headquarters will be open on Friday from 3 to 10 P.M., on Saturday from 10 A.M. to 10 P.M., and on Sunday from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M.

Following is a schedule of Saturday and Sunday book signings at the Festival headquarters. The authors' and artists' most recent publications appear after their names. Schedule subject to change.

BOOK SIGNINGS

SATURDAY

10 A.M.
Adam Gopnik
"Paris to the Moon"
Anthony Lane
"Nobody's Perfect: Selected Writings from *The New Yorker*"

11 A.M.
Haruki Murakami
"after the quake"
Annie Proulx
"Close Range: Wyoming Stories"

12 noon
Edwidge Danticat
"After the Dance: A Walk Through Carnival in Jacmel" and "Behind the Mountains"
Jonathan Safran Foer
"Everything Is Illuminated"

1 P.M.
Lorrie Moore
"Birds of America"
Calvin Trillin
"Tepper Isn't Going Out"

2 P.M.
Paul Auster
"I Thought My Father Was God" and "The Book of Illusions"
Jorie Graham
"Never: Poems"

3 P.M.
Andrea Lee
"Interesting Women"
Amy Tan
"The Bonesetter's Daughter"

SUNDAY

12:30 P.M.
Roz Chast
"The *New Yorker* Book of Kids' Cartoons"
Bob Mankoff
"The Naked Cartoonist"

1 P.M.
John Lahr
"Show and Tell: *New Yorker* Profiles"
Edna O'Brien
"In the Forest"

2 P.M.
Seamus Heaney
"Finders Keepers: Selected Prose 1971-2001"
Robert Pinsky
"Democracy, Culture, and the Voice of Poetry"

3 P.M.
Jeffrey Eugenides
"Middlesex"
Jonathan Franzen
"The Corrections" and "How to Be Alone"

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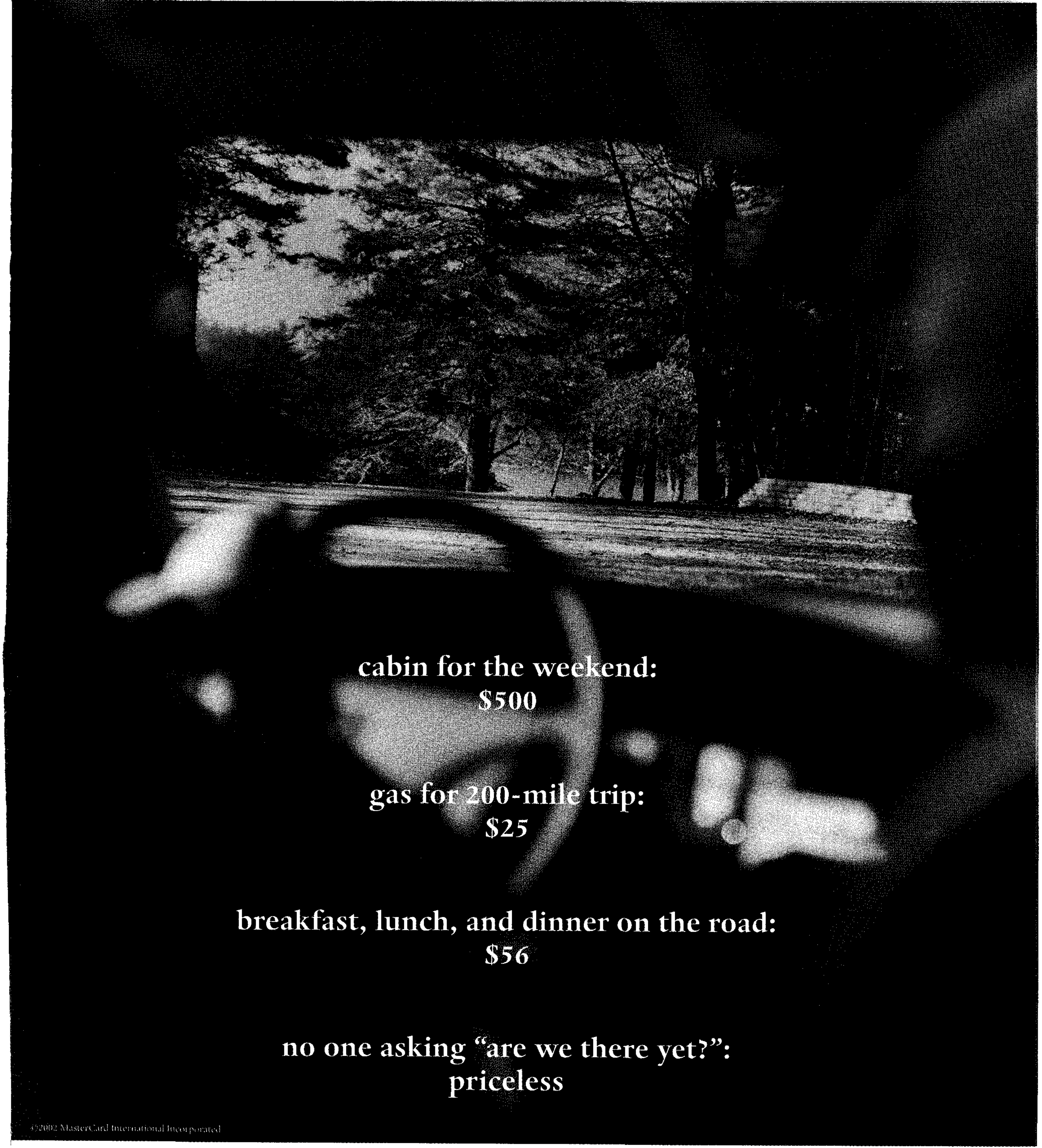
cabin for the weekend:
$500
gas for 200-mile trip:
$25
breakfast, lunch, and dinner on the road:
$56
no one asking "are we there yet?":
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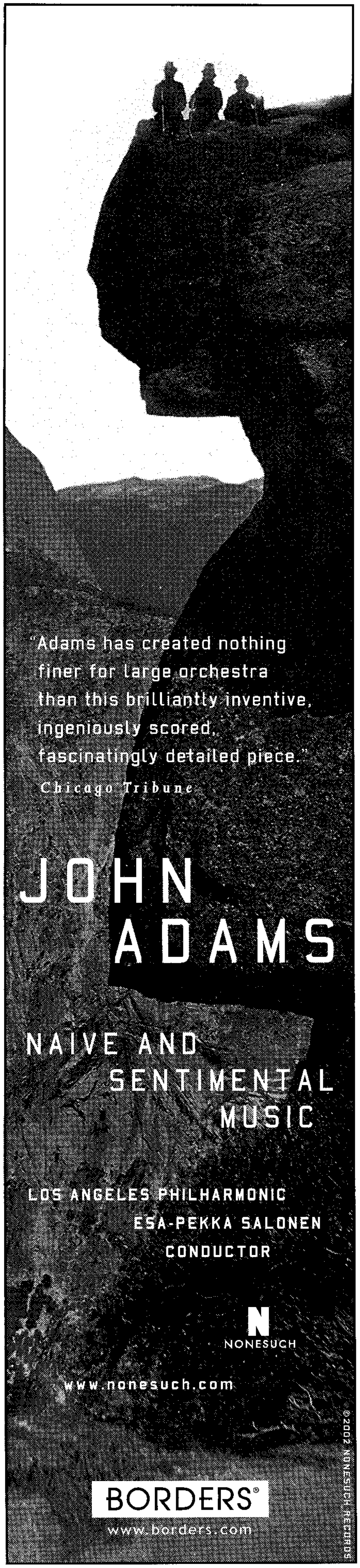
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SCHEDULE 2002

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

FICTION NIGHT

Martin Amis and James Fenton
9:30 P.M. Knitting Factory $15

Donald Antrim and Jeffrey Eugenides
7 P.M. Anthology Film Archives $15

Edwidge Danticat and Junot Díaz
9:30 P.M. Anthology Film Archives $15

E. L. Doctorow and Edna O'Brien
*9:30 P.M. Twirl $15**

Roddy Doyle and Jonathan Safran Foer
7 P.M. Knitting Factory $15

Dave Eggers and Zadie Smith
9:30 P.M. New York Quarterly Meeting House $15

Ian Frazier and Steve Martin
*7 P.M. Bowery Ballroom $15**

Nell Freudenberger and Lorrie Moore
*7 P.M. The Bitter End $15**

Stephen King and Amy Tan
*9:30 P.M. Bowery Ballroom $15**

Hanif Kureishi and Andrea Lee
7 P.M. Union Square Ballroom $15

Neil LaBute and Sam Shepard
*9:30 P.M. Shine $15**

Jhumpa Lahiri and Robert Stone
*9:30 P.M. The Bitter End $15**

Haruki Murakami, read by Paul Rudd, talks with Deborah Treisman
*7 P.M. Shine $15**

Annie Proulx and George Saunders
*7 P.M. Twirl $15**

David Foster Wallace and Jonathan Franzen
7 P.M. New York Quarterly Meeting House $15

LATE SHIFT

Lorne Michaels and "Saturday Night Live" cast members talk with David Remnick
9 P.M. NBC Studios $20

Aimee Mann talks with Ben Greenman
9:30 P.M. Union Square Ballroom $20

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Oliver Sacks interviewed by Lawrence Weschler
10 A.M. The Princeton Club $15

Seamus Heaney interviewed by David Remnick
10 A.M. Celeste Bartos Forum, The New York Public Library $15

Julie Taymor interviewed by Larissa MacFarquhar
1 P.M. Float $15

Richard Avedon interviewed by Adam Gopnik
3:30 P.M. Directors Guild Theatre $15

WRITERS AND THEIR SUBJECTS

John Lahr on Humor
10:30 A.M. Float $15

Alex Ross and John Adams
10:30 A.M. The Princeton Club $15

Anthony Lane on Cinema
1 P.M. Times Square Studios $15

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Bernard Lewis on History
1 P.M. The Princeton Club $15

Elizabeth Kolbert and the Reverend Al Sharpton
3 P.M. The Princeton Club $15

PANELS

Censorship and Creativity
10:30 A.M. Times Square Studios $15

Biorevolution
12:30 P.M. The Princeton Club $15

A Monster in the House
1 P.M. Directors Guild Theatre $15

My Day Job
3:30 P.M. Times Square Studios $15

The Next War
3:30 P.M. The Princeton Club $15

LATE SHIFT

Eddie Izzard talks with John Lahr
*9 P.M. Bowery Ballroom $20**

Kevin Smith talks with Michael Agger
9 P.M. Tribeca Film Center $20

David Byrne talks with Bill Buford
9 P.M. Knitting Factory $20

T Bone Burnett talks with Joel and Ethan Coen
9 P.M. Directors Guild Theatre $20

Ice Cube talks with Ben Greenman
*9 P.M. Float $20**

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

ABOUT TOWN

Private Viewing
9 to 10:30 A.M.
The Metropolitan Museum of Art $50
(includes museum admission)

Exhibit A: DNA
10 to 11:30 A.M. $25

Come Hungry
11 A.M. to 1 P.M. $50

Left Bank Brunch
11 A.M. to 12:30 P.M.
Bargemusic, Fulton Ferry Landing $40

Manhattan Unfurled
11 A.M. to 1 P.M. $50

Take the A(rt) Train
11 A.M. to 2 P.M.
The Studio Museum in Harlem $50 (includes museum admission)

Funny Drawings for Funny Kids
2:30 to 5 P.M.
MoMA QNS / The Museum of Modern Art, Queens $25 (includes museum admission)

CARTOON LAUGH-IN

10 to 11:30 A.M. Free.
Barnes & Noble Booksellers, Union Square

AN AFTERNOON WITH ELIZABETH BISHOP

4 P.M. $15
Town Hall

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*Note: You must be 21 to be admitted to this event.

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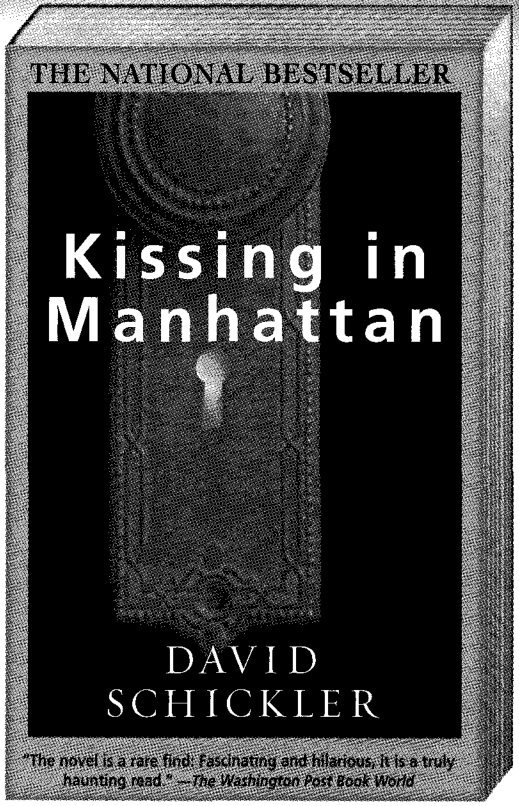
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VENUES

2002

Please note that age restrictions apply for some evening events.

Anthology Film Archives
32 Second Avenue

Bargemusic
Fulton Ferry Landing
Brooklyn

Barnes & Noble Booksellers
Union Square, 33 East 17th Street

The Bitter End
147 Bleecker Street
Note: You must be 21 to be admitted to evening events at this venue.

Bowery Ballroom
6 Delancey Street
Note: You must be 21 to be admitted to evening events at this venue.

Celeste Bartos Forum
The New York Public Library
Entrance on 42nd Street
between Fifth and Sixth Avenues

Directors Guild Theatre
110 West 57th Street

Float
240 West 52nd Street
Note: You must be 21 to be admitted to evening events at this venue.

Knitting Factory
74 Leonard Street

The Metropolitan Museum of Art
1000 Fifth Avenue at 82nd Street

MoMA QNS / The Museum of Modern Art, Queens
33rd Street at Queens Boulevard
Long Island City

NBC Studios
30 Rockefeller Plaza

New York Quarterly Meeting House
15 Rutherford Place,
on Stuyvesant Square between
East 15th and 16th Streets

The Princeton Club
15 West 43rd Street

Shine
285 West Broadway
at Canal Street
Note: You must be 21 to be admitted to evening events at this venue.

The Studio Museum in Harlem
144 West 125th Street

Times Square Studios
1500 Broadway at 44th Street

Town Hall
123 West 43rd Street

Tribeca Film Center
375 Greenwich Street
at Franklin Street

Twirl
208 West 23rd Street
Note: You must be 21 to be admitted to evening events at this venue.

Union Square Ballroom
27 Union Square West
at East 16th Street

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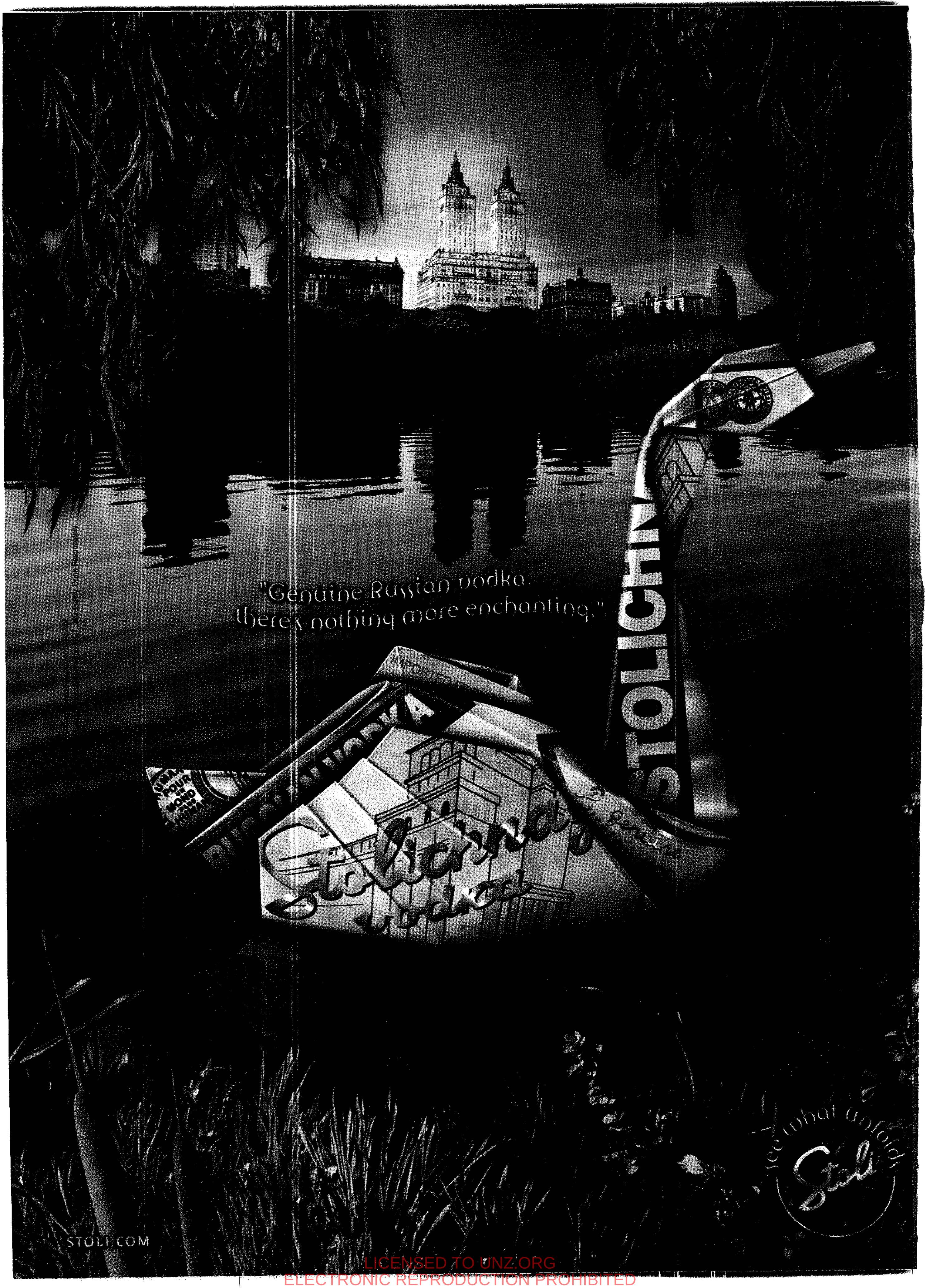
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thirteen," Paula Ford said. "Then he started writing about all this darkness in his life—guns, knives, violence." Soon, he turned to self-mutilation and setting fires, and that led to his being placed in the first of seventeen psychiatric hospitals and other therapeutic facilities. "The doctors kept telling us that Greg had clear signs of sexual abuse," his mother said.

Her husband interjected, "I'll never forget the way Greg explained the abuse to me." He arched his arms in a menacing fashion and leaned forward in his chair. This, he said, was how his son had described the recurring horror of being sodomized by Father Shanley.

"We sat right across the table from our archbishop," Paula Ford continued. "He never apologized for what happened; he never so much as met our eyes."

Father Cuenin, who had been listening quietly, shook his head. "And these are 'neglectful parents'?" he said. "For sending their child to a Church class?"

A number of lay groups have risen up in Boston in the past several months. One calls for an archdiocesan-wide assembly of parish leaders. Another has organized protests, marching with photos of sexual-abuse victims, as children. Voice of the Faithful, which was founded in February and is by far the largest of them, was in the process of organizing the July 20th convention.

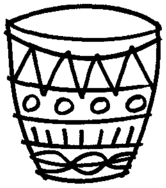
One meeting, in June, was held in the basement of St. Ignatius Church, in Chestnut Hill. There was a catacomb-like feeling about the gathering: hushed voices, subdued lighting, bowed heads. Cruets for water and wine and a dish used for the ritual hand-washing stood off to the side of a simple wooden altar, as if in readiness for Mass. Yet in front of the altar was a giant flip chart.

A Voice of the Faithful meeting perhaps resembles one of the early sessions that led to Vatican II, with one difference: these reformers are not priests but mostly ordinary people, ranging from their mid-twenties to their sixties and seventies. At St. Ignatius, eight subgroups, organized under such rubrics as Financial Voice, Parish Voice, and Voice of Renewal, were discussing strategies for bringing about changes in Church policy, including lay participation at every level of Church decision-making, and greater transparency in the allocation of Church funds and in the selection of parish priests and bishops.

Although some of the members had advocated drastic tactics, such as a siege on the chancery to demand Cardinal Law's resignation, more temperate voices prevailed. One group was working on an agreement with the National Catholic Community Foundation, whereby private donations could be made to Catholic causes outside official channels.

Voice of the Faithful has developed its own legion of *periti*—the experts who wrote the Vatican II documents and guided them toward promulgation. One expert, Thomas Beaudoin, who teaches theology part time at Boston College, read passages on lay involvement from *Lumen Gentium*, Vatican II's groundbreaking "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church," to an eager group of Gen X-ers. Another key figure, Paul Baier, is a specialist in dot-com startups. He organized the group's Web site—Voice of the Faithful has an e-mail list of twenty-five thousand correspondents throughout the United States and twenty-three other countries—and advanced ten thousand dollars of his own money toward the July 20th rally. He warned about hackers who have tried to infect the site, www.votf.org, and he reported that the Vatican had visited the site but had not signed up for regular participation.

The president of Voice of the Faithful is James Post, a fifty-eight-year-old professor of management at Boston University and a veteran of the Nestlé boycott, which alerted the world to the dangers of breast-milk substitutes in developing countries. "Generic complaints we've always had in the Catholic Church, but never the traction," he told me. "Three points: here is an issue that everyone agrees is egregious—it involves children. We squirm. Second, because of the Internet we have the ability to organize a community virtually overnight. And, third, the media is very interested. This is the first real twenty-first-century people's movement."

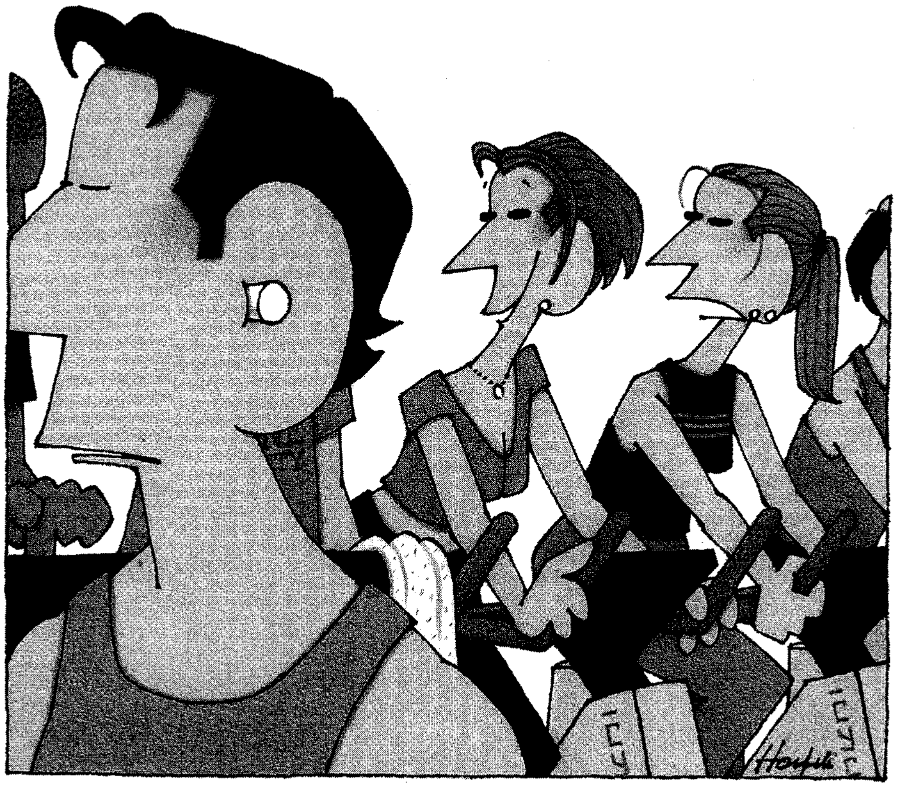


On June 7th, Father Cuenin stood in the lobby of Robsham Theatre, at Boston College, to greet the arrivals at an organizational meeting of the newly established Boston Priests' Forum. Most were in their fifties and sixties—men who had come of age during Vatican II. Younger Boston priests, out of concern for their careers, were reluctant to participate in such a public display of independence from the chancery, and Cardinal Law had made his opposition to the group clear when the editor of the archdiocesan newspaper, the *Pilot*, turned down an article about the Forum on the ground that the group was "divisive."

The Forum originated last fall, during a Saturday-night rectory dinner held by Father Cuenin and two pastors of nearby parishes, Father Paul Kilroy and Father Thomas Powers. "We looked at each other and realized that we lacked something even as basic as 'unsupervised conversation,' " Father Cuenin told me. "We live in a Balkanized world, isolated in our parishes, and we really had no opportunity to share our concerns openly, without fear of retribution."

What started as a group of three expanded to fifteen priests, then forty-five. After the pedophilia scandal broke, in January, the number grew rapidly. In May, Father Donald Cozzens, the author of a widely read book entitled "The Changing Face of the Priesthood," attracted an audience of two hundred—more than a third of Boston's diocesan priests. Before this, Father Kilroy said, "you couldn't get two hundred priests together if you gave them free tickets to a Red Sox game."

A hundred and eight priests showed up at the Boston College meeting, and agreed that the Forum should be formally organized, with or without the archdiocese's blessing. They would press for the right of due process for priests accused of sexual misconduct, and they would continue to invite guest speakers even if they were persona non grata in the archdiocese. They were especially eager to hear Eugene Kennedy, a former



"Be careful. Any man who wears earplugs at the gym is liable to wear a pocket protector at work."

• •

priest, speak on themes from his book "The Unhealed Wound: The Church, the Priesthood, and the Question of Sexuality," a scathing indictment of the Church's perception of human sexuality. Kennedy will appear this month. "I had never seen priests energized like this," Father Cuenin said later that evening in the rectory, as he nursed his nightly Martini. "For once, they were taking their professional lives into their own hands. This may be hard for lay Catholics to understand, but priests are more similar to them than they realize. We, too, often feel like powerless, voiceless underlings."

As outrage about the pedophilia scandal grew, the American Catholic bishops decided that their semiannual conference, which was to take place in Dallas, in mid-June, would be devoted to the matter. On the Sunday morning before the conference, I attended two Masses—one conducted by Father Cuenin at Our Lady's; the other by Cardinal Law at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, in Boston's South End.

The story of Christ dining with Matthew the tax collector was the Church's Gospel reading for the day. "If, as they say, you are known by the company you keep, Christ wasn't doing very much for his image here, eating with a miserable tax collector," Father Cuenin began, alluding to the holy man's willingness to break bread with one of the most despised functionaries of the time. Recently, he said, the Church had become more concerned with protecting its own image than with protecting its flock. The Church, he went on, must become more attentive to people whose lives have been fractured—for example, the divorced should be allowed a "front-row seat," and not be told that they are unworthy to approach the Communion banquet. Gays and lesbians should be in the "other front row," and not told that their lives are "basically disordered." He concluded, "How many of you feel marginalized right now? This wasn't Christ's way. Let's always remember that he called for mercy together with justice. The Eucharist is not a reward for good behavior—it is food for the journey of life."

Later that morning, in downtown Boston, the police had set up lines outside the cathedral well before a black Mercury bearing Cardinal Law emerged on Harrison Avenue and pulled into the parking lot behind the cathedral, which was heavily guarded. With a flash of red, the Cardinal disappeared through a back door. Thirty minutes later, he stood before some four hundred congregants, Catholic immigrants from approximtely fifty countries who had gathered for an annual multicultural Mass. Viewed from the rear of the cathedral, Cardinal Law looked magnificent in his white vestments, a tall mitre atop his silvery hair, his skin ruddy, his crosier held firmly in his left hand. He made no references in his homily to the upheaval in his archdiocese or to the impending conference in Dallas. In a soft, well-modulated voice, he gestured for the members of each nationality to stand for applause. The message was the unity of the Catholic Church: many countries brought together under the same God. But, as I approached the altar at Communion time, I saw that Cardinal Law's skin, in fact, was pallid and loose on his face, like an oversized shirt. His arms seemed leaden as he reached into the ciborium for the Host. He looked tired and sad.

A few days later, after the bishops in Dallas had proclaimed a new, zero-tolerance policy toward clerical sex abusers, Father Cuenin told the *National Catholic Reporter*, "This whole crisis can't be just on the backs of the priests. . . . I don't think the American people will be able to put trust back in the leadership of the Church if some bishops do not resign or leave the ministry." During Mass on the Sunday after the Dallas meeting, he began his homily by commenting on a passage in Matthew that is often used to introduce an appeal for young men to consider a priestly vocation. He took an unexpected turn, however. "This is going to sound a bit off the wall," he said, "but I'm going to ask you *not* to pray for vocations. But to pray that the Church will have the strength and the courage to acknowledge the vocations we already have. Exceptional women are waiting to serve. We have married men who would make wonderful priests. We don't need more vocations—they are already here. Let's just accept them."

At seven-thirty on the morning of July 20th, Father Cuenin stood in the parking lot of Our Lady's and waved goodbye as a busload of his parishioners left for the Voice of the Faithful rally, in Back Bay. Because he had to return to Newton for a two-o’clock wedding, he had decided to follow them in his own car.

At the Hynes Convention Center, the delegates filled the main floor and the balcony—forty-two hundred seats. Scores more had taken up standing positions along the walls. Father Cuenin and his ninety parishioners were wearing distinctive T-shirts with the message, front and back, “Our Lady’s Voice. Newton. Keep the Faith. Change the Church,” and they cut a noticeable blue swath on the convention floor. The event had drawn a much younger crowd than Father Cuenin had expected, and a sizable number had come from outside the Boston area. Kris Ward had flown in from Dayton, Ohio, and spent the night on the floor at Logan International Airport. “I’ve been waiting most of my Catholic life to hear what Voice of the Faithful is advocating,” she said. “Yes!”

Much of the daylong program of lectures and workshops was devoted to exploring the theological roots of lay participation in Church affairs. The most acclaimed speaker was Father Thomas Doyle, one of the authors of a 1985 report, written for the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, on rampant sexual abuse among priests. It was ignored. In his address, Father Doyle described current developments as “the initial death throes of the medieval, monarchical model of the Church,” and urged his listeners to help free Church officials “from these terrible chains of addiction to power and control.” If the Church was not meant to be a democracy, he pointed out, neither was it intended to be an oligarchy. “It’s a community,” he said.

“All good,” Father Cuenin said the next morning, as we sat on the deck outside the rectory kitchen. “But what they need and what we need”—he was referring to the Priests’ Forum—“is a community organizer like Saul Alinsky. Some way to put pressure on the hierarchy for change. A lunch counter to be arrested at.” He called out to the adjacent parking lot, “Excuse me, is there a lunch counter out there?

“This is an extraordinarily complex issue,” he continued. “A new understanding of the sacrament of baptism has completely upended the old system whereby the ministry was largely limited to ordained priests. It is through baptism that the Holy Spirit gives *every* Christian a share in the ministry of Christ in the Church. In other words, there is the sense that the whole community—the bishop and the people—has the power to ordain. Unfortunately, many in today’s leadership find that difficult to accept. So we basically have two different Churches operating at the same time. We keep on talking about the ‘Vatican II Church.’ But the Pope who, in the spirit of Vatican II, goes to Assisi to meet as a coequal with other religious heads is the same Pope who endorses the Vatican declaration *Dominus Iesus*, which categorically proclaims the supremacy of Roman Catholicism. The conflict within the Church is dizzying.

“When I entered the seminary,” he went on, “the very theologians who eventually wrote the Vatican II documents were in exile, their writings suppressed. But they weren’t radicals, and neither am I. Change will come when we least expect it, in a blinding flash. Vatican II is a perfect example: virtually overnight, the Church began to change because the buildup was there, the time was right.”

Several days later, Father Cuenin, now dressed in proper clerical black, stood in Our Lady’s parking lot. Beside him was Cardinal Law. The Cardinal had arrived to join six hundred young Catholics who were travelling by bus to Toronto to celebrate World Youth Day in the presence of the Pope. As pilgrimage director for the archdiocese, Father Cuenin had been asked by the chancery to organize the trip.

The media had turned out, prompted by an announcement by the archdiocese that it would not accept Voice of the Faithful’s circuitous donations, even as it was making cuts to charity because of a shortfall in the Cardinal’s Appeal for 2002. Outwardly, the two men seemed on the best of terms. But as the Cardinal climbed aboard one of the buses, Father Cuenin said he was sorry that parish duties prevented him from going on the twelve-hour road trip. He added that he would be flying to Toronto a few hours later. “Walter,” Cardinal Law said, admonishing his dissident priest with a smile, “we all have to make our sacrifices.” ♦

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A REPORTER AT LARGE

CAN YOU FORGIVE HIM?

Buddy Cianci, the mayor of Providence, Rhode Island, says he is a visionary, not a crook.

BY PHILIP GOUREVITCH

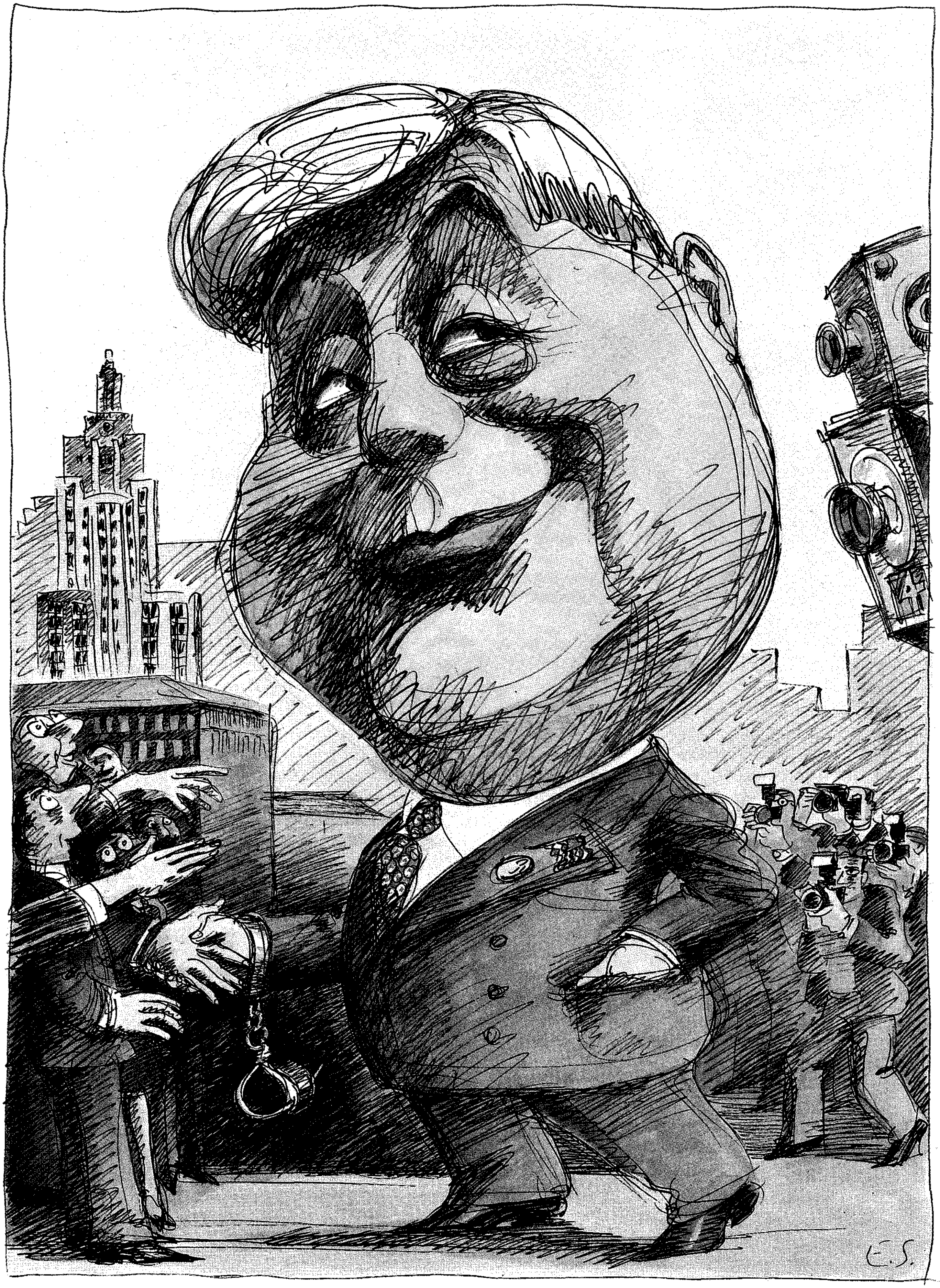
In the fall of 1978, I stood on the shoulder of I-95 North in southern Connecticut, facing the traffic and holding out a sheet of cardboard on which I'd written the word "Providence." The sign worked; it took me three rides to get there—all of them cars with Rhode Island plates. The first was an aging purple Cadillac, piloted by what looked like a pirate: long stringy red hair tied in a bandanna, long stringy red beard, mirror shades, black leather vest (no shirt, just more red hair), and leather pants. He drove fast and ignored me, cursing at his eight-track tape deck, which was on the fritz. He kept stabbing a large screwdriver into it. "Providence?" he said suddenly. "What for? You from there?" No, I said, just visiting. "I'm from there," he said. "Armpit of New England." He flexed his arm in the shape of Cape Cod to illustrate the point, then rammed his screwdriver back into the dashboard and announced, "Motherfucker's busted, I'm dropping you off." My next ride was a Pontiac with a fading "Ford for President" bumper sticker and a lady driver, a schoolteacher from Newport in pearls and a Fair Isle sweater, who said she never stopped for hitchers but she'd had a notion: If you were my kid, I'd want someone just like me to pick you up. We listened to Mozart, and when we crossed the state line she said, "Welcome to Rogue's Island," and giggled. She left me at her exit ramp, and an Econoline van stopped, and the back door opened, and I climbed into a dark space where four very stoned people and a stoned-looking dog were sprawled on a couple of futons. The driver was apparently in no better shape than the passengers, because the van crawled along the interstate at a frighteningly slow speed. The people in back were from Woonsocket or Pawtucket. I can't remember, and I'm not sure they could, either. We'd been talking for some time when one of them said, "Who are you?" Another said, "He's the hitchhiker," and the first one said, "The same hitchhiker?" The third one said, "Ask him." Then someone said, "What state are we in?" and another said, "Confusion," just as I said, "Rhode Island," and the four of them laughed about that, repeating it over and over—Rhode Island, Confusion, Confusion, Rhode Island—until the van finally stopped, and we pushed the door open, and there was downtown Providence.

It looked like a railroad yard. In fact, it was a railroad yard. A broad delta of converging tracks sliced right through the city center and under the back door of the state capitol—a luminous palace of white marble crowned by an immense dome that looked like nothing so much as an extravagant tombstone against the surrounding desolation. Even by the hard-bitten standards of the rest of the Northeast in those days of oil crisis and post-industrial decline, Providence was notorious, its mills and factories shuttered, its docks and shipyards following suit, its city center lifeless, with once proud mercantile buildings standing dark and empty. The citizenry was in rout: Providence had one of the most rapidly dwindling populations in America. I spent a night there with a friend, then took a train home. "One way or round trip?" the Amtrak ticket man said, and when I told him, "One way," he said, "Smart bastard."

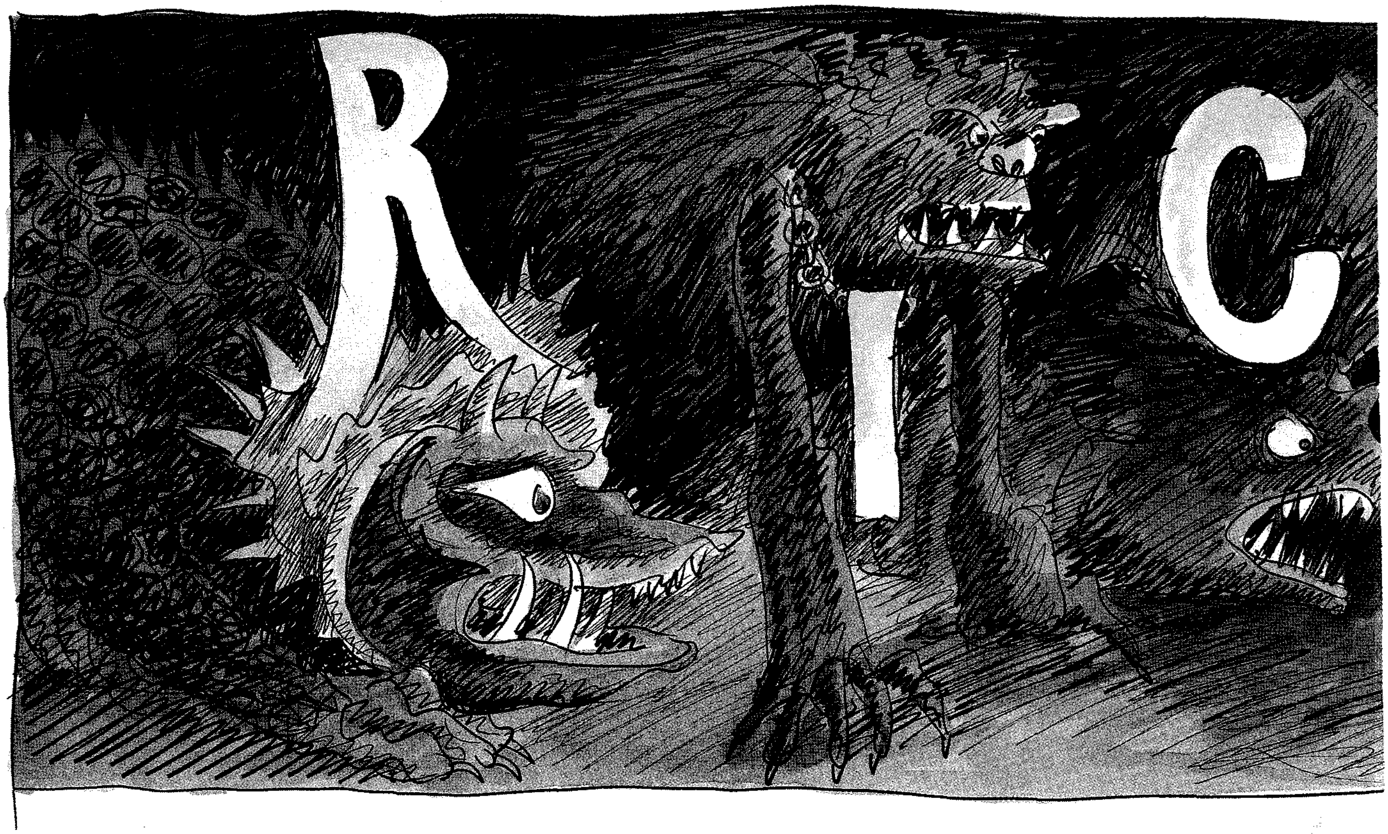
This summer, I returned to Providence to sit in on the racketeering trial of the mayor: United States of America v. Vincent A. Cianci, Jr. a/k/a "Buddy." The "a/k/a" had a prosecutorial sneer to it, as if Buddy were not the name by which Cianci is universally known but, rather, an underworld alias. Cianci has been mayor on and off now for a total of twenty-one years. He is among the longest-serving mayors in the country today, a political maverick and a relentless booster of his city and himself, and in the course of his tenure he has presided over the most celebrated resuscitation of an American city in our time. When he first took office, in 1975, Providence was in the depths of a seemingly terminal downward slide. Today, the city center I saw on my first visit is almost unrecognizably transformed. The rail yards are gone, replaced in part by a vast, upscale shopping mall, in part by several new hotels, and, most strikingly, by the elegant Waterplace Park, an area of greens and stone promenades and canals that was created by excavating three long-buried rivers and rerouting them to wind—complete with bobbing gondolas—through the heart of the city. Spurred by the success of these huge projects in the last ten years of Cianci's mayoralty, Providence has reversed demographic direction and now boasts one of the fastest-growing (and most diverse) urban populations in New England. Property values have risen. Crime rates have fallen. The city's theatres and restaurants are ranked among the best in the Northeast. Its zoo, from which monkeys were escaping onto the freeways on Cianci's first night in office, is considered of the highest order nationally. So are its parks, its support for visual artists, and its preservation of historic architecture. Touted by City Hall as the Renaissance City, it has become a thriving "destination city" for conventioneers and tourists (a two-billion-dollar-a-year industry). Since 1997, Providence has been ranked among the ten best places to live in America by *Money* (which also rated it one of the ten best for retirement), the *Utne Reader*, and the lesbian monthly *Girlfriends*.

During the same five-year period, Providence was also the scene of a multitentacled F.B.I. investigation of municipal corruption, code-named Operation Plunder Dome, which led to criminal charges being brought against nearly a dozen

ILLUSTRATIONS BY EDWARD SOREL



Mayor Cianci has been elected repeatedly. "There's no celebrities around here, so Buddy's it," one Providence citizen explained.

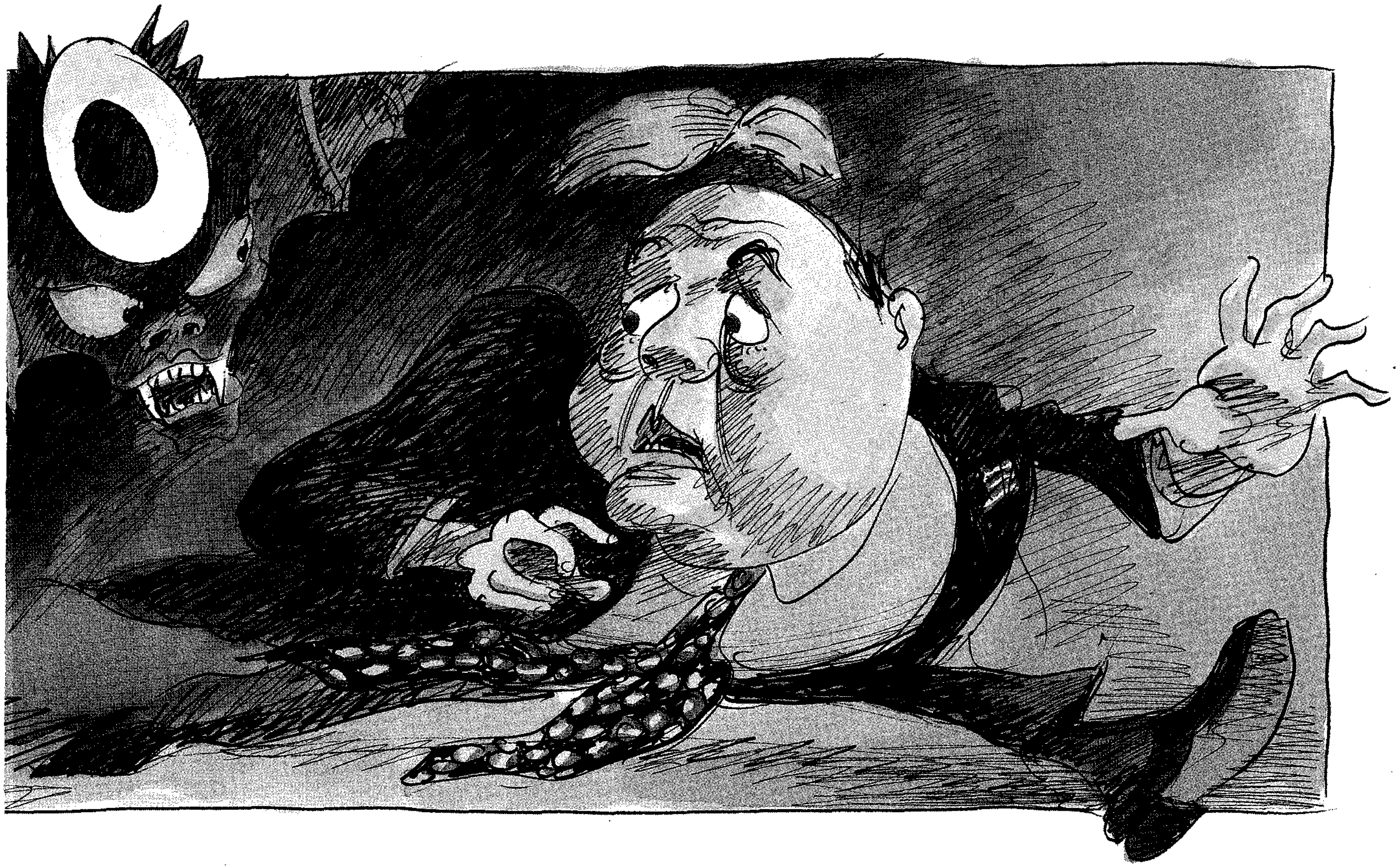


Mayor Cianci was tripped up by a charge of conspiracy under the terms of the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations a

Cianci appointees and their associates and, ultimately, against Cianci himself. The F.B.I. went public with Plunder Dome on April 28, 1999, raiding five city agencies, arresting a pair of elderly tax assessors, and announcing that it had undercover audio- and videotapes that would incriminate many more city officials. That afternoon, Cianci held a news conference, where he plucked his lapels and proclaimed his innocence with a Monica Lewinsky joke: "You're not going to find any stains on this jacket." Two years later, when the United States Attorney's office in Rhode Island issued a thirty-count indictment charging him and a handful of co-defendants with running a criminal enterprise out of City Hall whose aim was "enriching, promoting, and protecting" their power and assets, he said, "Still no stains."

The indictment accused Cianci of taking kickbacks from the landlord of a building leased by the School Department; of selling a city job for five thousand dollars; of attempting to extort ten thousand dollars from a man who wanted to buy city land; of shaking down tow-truck operators for a quarter-million dollars in campaign contributions; of pocketing ten thousand dollars from the estate of a buckle manufacturer in exchange for a four-hundred-and-fifty-thousand-dollar tax break; of bullying an élite private club into giving him a free lifetime membership by withholding city building permits; and of tampering with a witness. Two of the charges fell under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations act, or RICO. One of the RICO charges was for conspiracy, and the remaining twenty-nine charges described a variety of particular criminal acts allegedly committed in the service of the conspiracy. Cianci held up the ninety-seven-page document and told reporters, "Ninety-seven times zero equals zero." He said that he was enraged but unafraid, characterized the charges as "nothing but lies . . . based on self-serving statements of criminals seeking to save their own skin," and vowed to defend his innocence till his dying day: "I will go all the way to the Supreme Court, The Hague, wherever they want to go." In the meantime, he said, "Let me do my job. Let me be the mayor. And I'll see everyone in court."

Cianci had been in trouble before. In 1983, a grand jury indicted him on six counts, including kidnapping and assault with a dangerous weapon, following an evening he spent torturing a man who was dating his ex-wife. With the help of a policeman, Cianci, whose divorce had gone through the week before, held the man captive for three hours, in the course of which he poured liquor on him, hurled an ashtray at him, swung at him with a fireplace log, burned his eyelid with a lit cigarette, demanded five hundred thousand dollars, and threatened to put a bullet in his head. "I saw a crazed man," the victim told the police. "I saw a lunatic, you know, simply stated." Cianci allowed that there had been a dispute, but denied that it was violent. "I was hoping to go through an amicable divorce, and complications resulted in an altercation," he told the Washington *Post*, adding, "I am a human being. I sweat. I feel. I cry. I laugh. I get angry. I am still going to run my city." He held on for a year, awaiting trial and fighting off efforts to oust him by means of a recall campaign. Then, faced with the possibility of as much as seventy-one years of jail time, he entered a no-contest plea. He said his eleven-year-old daughter had persuaded him that this was the right thing to do. The judge agreed, and sentenced Cianci to five years' probation in lieu of jail. As a convicted felon, he was forced to resign from City Hall, where four hundred supporters gathered to see



RICO), the "godfather" law, which was designed to ensnare mobsters who had eluded convictions for specific crimes.

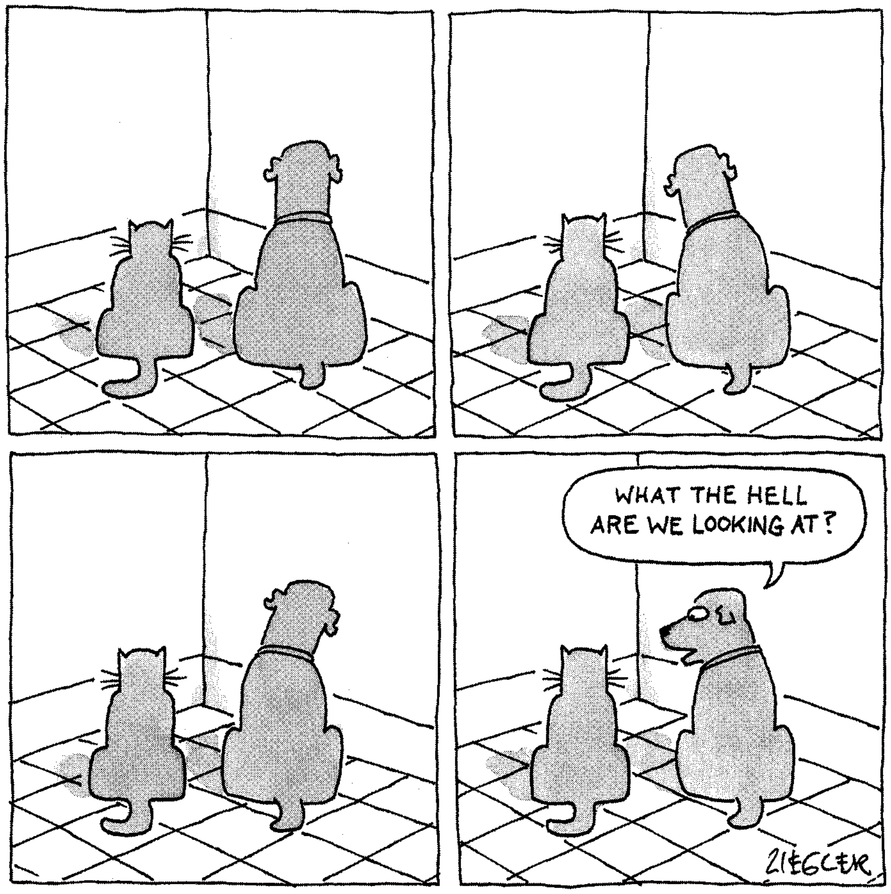
him off, and to chant, "You'll be back."

Many of the downtown restoration projects that ultimately brought Providence such success were initiated during Cianci's first mayoralty, but he left the city in fiscal disarray. Sixteen million dollars was simply unaccounted for from the previous year's budget, and, in the wake of his resignation, thirty members of his administration were indicted on charges of corruption. Twenty-two were convicted, and sixteen, including several of Cianci's closest associates, went to jail for such offenses as selling no-show "ghost" jobs on the city payroll and looting equipment from the Public Works Department. Cianci himself was untouched in the sweep, but, according to Lincoln Almond, who was the United States Attorney at the time and is now the governor, that was only because Rhode Island election laws still allowed cash contributions, making the Mayor's money essentially untraceable. After all, Almond told me, "most individuals who commit crimes through bribery are happy customers. They paid for something and they got something, and they don't want to coöperate with prosecutors, because they got what they wanted."

As a private citizen, Cianci remained a public figure, hosting a talk-radio show that quickly became the most popular call-in program in Rhode Island. Still, when he ran again for mayor in 1990, quoting Biblical teachings on forgiveness, two-thirds of the voters in Providence said they'd never vote for him. He didn't mind; it was a three-way race. He won back City Hall with just three hundred and seventeen votes, and, in 1998, when he was most recently reëlected, nobody bothered to challenge him.

"You know why I'm mayor?" Cianci said to me one night at the bar of the Biltmore Hotel. "Because Providence has smart voters. Yeah, I punched a guy in the mouth for fucking my wife. But look at the city. People come here from Boston to go to the zoo, go to the theatre, go to a restaurant. Used to be the reverse. Cities are about choices. Choices—having more shit you want to do than you can do. This hotel was about to be torn down when I became mayor the first time." Cianci lives at the Biltmore, which is next door to City Hall. He has never remarried, and two years ago he sold his home, a landmarked carriage house, and resettled in the hotel's presidential suite. The move, coupled with Cianci's subsequent sale of a motor yacht he had seemed to enjoy, inspired speculation that he was liquidating assets in anticipation of indictment and the threat of forfeiture. He said no, he was tired of rattling around in a big house, and he wouldn't miss buying toilet paper. The hotel suits his image; it towers over downtown, and in its Prohibition-era lobby—heavy with marble and gilding—the jackbooted police who drive Cianci's black Lincoln Town Car (license-plate number: 1) look almost appropriate.

Cianci is built low and wide, and he favors loose, dark suits. In high school, he wrestled as a heavyweight, and he retains something of the wrestler's bearlike crouch in his posture, carrying himself tipped forward from the waist, advancing forehead first, elbows out and hands dangling, as if ready to grapple. He moves with a curiously rolling gait, yet his step has a boyish lightness for a man of sixty-one. In 1996, *Rhode Island Monthly* reported that he was the man whom women in the state would most like to date, which was instructive, because, as Bruce Sundlun, a former governor and a staunch friend of Cianci's, put it to me, with a mixture of regret and admiration, "He looks like a crook." The skin beneath his large dark eyes hangs in heavy, drooping bags. The eyes themselves are astonishingly active, animating the soft round


WHAT THE HELL ARE WE LOOKING AT?
ZIEGLER

• •

he worked on political corruption and organized-crime cases. He was first elected as a reformer, taking on the Democratic machine, which was divided against itself, and he rode through its split as a Republican (the first to win City Hall since 1938, and the city's first Italian-American mayor ever). In 1976, he was the speaker before the keynote at the Republican National Convention, but six years later, having failed in a bid for governor in 1980, he quit the Party, and he has been an independent ever since. "There's no Republican way to pick up snow," he says, "and no Democratic way to build a park." Over the years, he has come to inhabit his mayorhood so totally, making himself your Buddy, our Buddy, everybody's Buddy, that many people in Providence could hardly imagine the city with no Buddy.

Providence is a small city of not quite a hundred and seventy-five thousand people, and Cianci's appetite for attention is gargantuan. Over the years, he has found a national audience on Don Imus's morning talk show, where he has appeared a dozen times to joke and chat. On April 10th last year, a week after he was indicted, Imus had him on again, and the Providence *Journal* covered his performance extensively. An accordion played the theme from "The Godfather" in the background, and Cianci described the forces arrayed against him: "These people come across as holier than thou. They're the leaders of the free world. When you go against the United States of America, you're going against the F.B.I., the I.R.S., the Coast Guard, the Navy SEALs. And here you are, all alone." From this parody of his accusers' might, he went on to revel in their weaknesses. The day before, the *Journal* had reported that the chief prosecutor in the Cianci case, Assistant United States Attorney Richard Rose, had taken home a videotape made for the F.B.I. by an undercover informant and had played portions of it for his sister and a couple of friends. ("I wonder if he sold popcorn," Cianci quipped.) The tape, filmed by a camera hidden inside a briefcase, showed the informant, Antonio Freitas, a local heating and air-conditioning contractor, passing a thousand-dollar cash bribe to Cianci's longtime director of administration and chief fund-raiser, Frank Corrente, at City Hall.

Cianci noted that Freitas, who was

of his face with a quick, ticking intelligence. On most days, he wears makeup—a dusting of pancake—in case he encounters a camera. When we first met, at the Biltmore bar, Cianci had stopped in for a nightcap and a smoke. Of his legal troubles he said only, "You ever been on trial? It's hell sitting still all day."

He was making up for the enforced idleness by hurtling around Providence—from a high-school graduation to a Little League game, from an art opening to a community-board meeting. He is known for making more public appearances in a day than most politicians allow their schedulers to sprinkle over a week. He is an old-school campaigner for whom the campaigning never stops, and that means showing up at everything—not just the big dos, the ribbon cuttings and groundbreakings and socialite schmoozings, but also the bodega openings, retirement-home birthday parties, amateur theatricals. He has his own brand of marinara sauce, with his picture on the label, which he hands out to visitors and shills at every opportunity, donating part of the proceeds to a college-scholarship fund for city students. When he attends an event, he may not stay long, and he may not leave, but if you invite him, and sometimes even if you don't, there's a good chance he'll come. He has said that he will show up for the opening of an envelope, and although that was Andy Warhol's line, in Providence it is considered to be pure Buddy.

By all accounts, Cianci is so tirelessly ubiquitous not only because it's good public relations but because he likes it, and Buddy Cianci does what he likes. He exudes the game, absurdist cheer of a man who knows that one can get away with a great deal in this world, a man who lives by his own rules and is not averse to making up those rules as he goes. To his admirers this is what makes him a visionary leader, and to his detractors it is what makes him corrupt. Public-opinion polls find that most Rhode Islanders believe he is both.

Cianci is a proctologist's son, raised more than comfortably middle-class. He is a Vietnam-era veteran, and as a young man he was a prosecutor in the state attorney general's office, where the prosecution's star witness—a self-proclaimed honest businessman who had volunteered as an F.B.I. mole—had been on probation following three arrests for domestic violence against his estranged wife, and was now in jail for four months after being charged with assaulting an ex-girlfriend. What was more, Cianci claimed, Dennis Aiken, the top F.B.I. investigator on the case, had signed an affidavit admitting to an incident earlier in his career in which he had lied about official F.B.I. business. Cianci thought the lie concerned money, which turned out not to be true. (Aiken had been censured for denying that he had signed a document that he had in fact signed.) But the Mayor's message was clear: Look at these guys who say I misbehave.

The Mayor also took the opportunity to broadcast the good news from Providence—the surge in population, and the birth of a polar bear at the zoo—and he let the last laugh come at his own expense. Imus asked how it had gone when he was booked following his indictment and had to sit for a mug shot: "Did they make you take off your rug?" Cianci, whose taste in hairpieces occasions much happy banter in Providence, said, "Absolutely."

About an hour after Cianci finished with Imus, one of his staffers, Christopher Nocera, was walking to work, and came upon the F.B.I. agent, Dennis Aiken, on the sidewalk outside City Hall. According to Nocera, Aiken shook his hand, "and told me in a very firm tone that I better go tell my piece-of-shit mayor to retract the lies he told about him on the radio that morning." Cianci's lawyer, Richard Egbert, shot off a letter to the United States Attorney, saying that Nocera had been "intimidated," and that Aiken's intolerable conduct had precipitated "a great deal of concern for the fairness of the process concerning Mayor Cianci." Cianci then gave an interview to Mike Stanton, of the *Journal*, in which he admitted that he might have muddled the details about Aiken's affidavit when he spoke to Imus, but he insisted that he had not been unfair: "I said what I said. He signed an affidavit saying that he lied . . . whether it was about money, women, I don't know what it's about." Where would it end? Cianci wondered. "We go from tapes that are being released, private showings, sneak previews. Now we go to witnesses being intimidated on the streets. Don't forget this man was armed . . . an armed agent of the federal government. And it had nothing to do with the case. It had to do with him personally."

Cianci's trial was still a year in the offing, but the court of public opinion was in full session. Before long, the undercover video of Freitas bribing Corrente fell into the hands of a local television reporter, and was beamed across Rhode Island. The judge for Plunder Dome, Ernest Torres, assigned a special prosecutor to determine how the reporter got it. (Torres is still waiting to find out.) In the meantime, he imposed a gag order on everyone involved in the proceedings. He fined Rose, the prosecutor, five hundred dollars for playing the bribery tape to his friends, and suspended him from the case for thirty days. Things calmed down considerably after that, but in Cianci's extended audience the sound of his silence was as disquieting as any noise he ever made.

Political corruption is to Rhode Islanders as smog is to people who live in Los Angeles: nobody complains of its absence, but when it rolls around everyone feels right at home. Whether Rhode Island is any more corrupt than the next place is almost beside the point (remember Florida; think about Halliburton; talk about Washington). Rhode Island, our smallest state, is so small that its mischief is disproportionately conspicuous, like clutter in a cramped room. But the fact is that Rhode Islanders believe they are exceptional in their corruption, and their belief is informed by a long history of political profiteering and its attendant scandals. To say that Rhode Islanders often take a scrappy pride in this doesn't mean that they are shameless—only that their folklore disposes them to sympathy for renegades and gumption. "Fascinating history," former Governor Sundlun said. "Bunch of fucking rebels started this place."

He meant Roger Williams and his band of dissident Puritans, who in the sixteen-thirties fled the tyranny of the Massachusetts church fathers to create what the Brown University historian William McLoughlin called "a free community of seekers after Truth" on the shores of Narragansett Bay. The Rhode Island putdowns soon started, with Cotton Mather exclaiming about "the sewer of New England" and "the fag end of Creation." Laws against Rhode Island Quakers were passed in Massachusetts, with penalties like ear-cropping and tongue-boring. The original three-strikes policy came in 1658: any Quaker seeking martyrdom had only to return thrice to be hanged on Boston Common. Among themselves, Rhode Islanders were not more easily governed: they took their liberty seriously, and, as the colony grew, how you pursued your greed was pretty nearly as much your own business as how you feared your God. By the mid-eighteenth century, there was a bull market in privateering and the slave trade—the Browns of university fame made much of their treasure selling Africans—and there were more slaves owned per capita than anywhere else in New England. (Rhode Islanders—including, most prominently, a Brown—also led the call for abolition.) When the Revolution came, the colony was famously "first in war, last in peace"; that is, the first to fight the British and the last to join the Union. It is a measure of the enduring power of Roger Williams's original idea that, four centuries later, former Governor Sundlun would speak of that time in the first person. The war: "In 1772, we sank the British warship Gaspee, and in 1777 we caught General Prescott while he was with some woman and we knocked off the sentry and took him up to Providence and paraded him in his underwear." The peace: "We did two things that'd never been done before—ever—in the history of the world: freedom of religion, and government not imposed but at the will of the people."

Of course, there were people whose will counted more than that of others. In 1790, the industrial revolution began in the United States when the first automated textile mill opened in Pawtucket. By the mid-nineteenth century, one out of three people in the state (children included) was a textile worker—most of them miserably paid immigrant Catholics—and, to keep them from cluttering up the polls, a property qualification was added to the voting rolls. (By 1840, Rhode Island was the only state to maintain such a burden, and it stayed in place, a guarantor of Yankee Wasp power, until 1928. It was not until 1973 that Rhode Islanders achieved universal suffrage.) Mills proliferated around the state through the nineteenth century. Providence had its share (Fruit of the Loom was founded nearby); the city also became a center for the jewelry and precious-metals industry (key techniques in gold plating were invented there), and for steam-engine manufacture (Corliss revolutionized the machine age there). By century's end, the state's affluence had found political expression and protection in the figure of Senator Nelson W. Aldrich, the vastly powerful head of both the finance and steering committees, whose devotion to the interests of Gilded Age Wall Street caused him to be known as "the general manager," or simply "the boss," of the United States. The muckraking journalist Lincoln Steffens visited Rhode Island in 1905 to see what sort of political system had produced Aldrich, and reported that it was "grounded on the lowest layer of corruption that I have found thus far—the bribery of voters with cash at the polls." And he said, "There is nothing peculiar about the general result of the corruption of the state. Rhode Island is an oligarchy."

Steffens began his article, "Rhode Island: A State for Sale," with a sentence that is still frequently quoted with some relish by the state's aficionados of sleaze: "The political condition of Rhode Island is notorious, acknowledged, and it is shameful." The practice of vote-buying was "so ancient and so common" a "custom of the country," he wrote, that "it is an institution, and, like the church or property, it is not safe to attack it." By way of evidence, Steffens quoted from a "Special Message Concerning Bribery in Elections," which the governor had delivered to the General Assembly in 1903: "In a considerable number of our towns . . . the awful nature of the crime has ceased to impress. In some towns the bribery takes place openly; is not called bribery, nor considered a serious matter." If cash was in short supply, the governor said, voters would take cigars, and Steffens quoted the boss of a Democratic town who told him, "My town is all right. The Republicans can come in there with more money than I have, and I can still hold it. Suppose they have enough to pay ten dollars a vote and I can give but three; I tell my fellows to go over and get the ten, then come to me and get my three; that makes thirteen, but I tell them to vote my way. And they do. And the Republicans do the same in their solid towns when we go in to outbid them."

"It's kind of a trademark thing. I shoot first. Then I ask questions. Then I yodel."

Things do change: nowadays the complaint in Rhode Island is that the oligarchs take the money, and the voters must pay. (A popular bumper sticker reads, "This state has the best politicians money can buy.") It is not clear just when the shift from vote-buying to politician-buying occurred, but the Mafia surely helped to model the new order. For much of the second half of the past century, Providence's chief claim to preëminence was as a Mob town, home to Raymond Patriarca, the godfather of New England, a jarringly unsightly man to whom even the bosses of New York's five families ultimately deferred, and to whom, it is believed, the C.I.A. was referred in the early sixties when its agents were considering taking a contract out on Fidel Castro. Patriarca ran his rackets, a multibillion-dollar-a-year operation, out of a Coin-O-Matic vending-machine business on Atwells Avenue, the main thoroughfare of Federal Hill, Providence's Little Italy. Day and night, a steady file of callers would come to him there to drop off their envelopes of tribute and protection money. Patriarca was under constant investigation, and he spent substantial stretches of time in jail on various charges (the young Cianci once helped prosecute him), but even from jail he managed to exert administrative control over his organization. His power was mainly a measure of weakness in others, and he was able over time to bully and buy the coöperation—the blind eye, the deaf ear, the stayed (and sometimes even the extended) hand—of any number of people who should rightfully have opposed him: public servants, cops, judges, elected officials. He was known far and wide as the King of New England, but a king is a remote figure, disengaged from the daily life of his people, and in Providence he was known as the Mayor.

Patriarca died in 1984, around the time the first Cianci administration ended, and when Cianci returned to City Hall the Providence Mob had been all but wiped out by RICO prosecutions. With time, as Cianci consolidated his power, he took on the role of—yes—a patriarch, and, for better or for worse, he

"I figured what the hell—time to lighten up."

came to be regarded as the new don. To be sure, his buoyant ringmaster's comportment—not merely mayor but mascot—was as different from his predecessor's shadowy aloofness as the resurgent city is from its not-so-long-ago dereliction. He had come back, and Providence had come back, and he did not let you forget it. He was the mayor as maître d', the host of the party. The identification was absolute. He had no other existence, and after his Plunder Dome indictment he often spoke of the resurgent city and its accomplishments as if they were an alibi, arguing that his administration could not have achieved so much if it had been so corrupt.

Maureen Moakley, the chair of the political-science department at the University of Rhode Island, and a prominent academic voice in the discussion of Providence's turnaround, told me that Cianci was largely justified in taking credit for the changes. "I've looked at the history of the renaissance pretty systematically," she said. "And although there are a lot of people whose ideas and vision contributed to the changes you can see in the city, it's clear that Buddy provided a lot of the political will and the political energy to make it all happen. He was able to mobilize resources and people in a very significant way. He had the clout and the imagination to do things." If Cianci was also at times thuggish, even at times a thug—well, there was a tradition, and perhaps an appeal in that, too, especially in a city and state (Cianci likes to call it a city-state) with something of a Napoleon complex. "There's a sense in a small town like this—it's better to have a somebody than a nobody, a little bit of an element of you'd *rather* have someone like that, a big figure," John DePetro, a radio host on Rhode Island's leading talk station, WHJJ—Cianci's old station—told me. "There's no celebrities around here, so Buddy's it." And a local defense lawyer said, "People are willing to compromise principle a little for prosperity. People in Providence are willing to put up with shenanigans because they're doing well."

But the United States of America—at least, as represented by the Plunder Dome prosecutor, Richard Rose—was not amused. Rose's job was to prove that Buddy Cianci was a criminal, and he rejected the possibility that he might also be a good mayor, scoffing, "The so-called Renaissance City was a city for sale." In borrowing Lincoln Steffens's famous phrase, Rose might also have added its last two words, "and cheap." The sums of dirty money that Cianci was accused of traducing the law for tended to be embarrassingly petty: five thousand bucks here, ten thousand in a big score, and the one impressive number—the quarter million he was accused of squeezing from tow-truck operators—had trickled in over nine years, a thousand dollars at a time. Crookery is crookery, but the government's decision to bring its case under RICO, the "godfather law"—treating the Mayor as the capo-di-tutti-capi of a criminal enterprise (call it the Cianci gang) that had used City Hall as a front—suggested a degree of prosecutorial desperation. After all, the F.B.I. had pursued Cianci before, during his first administration and at intervals since, without ever being able to find enough evidence against him to bring an indictment. During one of the F.B.I.'s previous assaults on City Hall, an undercover operative, posing as someone seeking to do business with the city, had met with the Mayor, only to be told, "Nobody will ask you for anything. If anyone does, you call me. I'll cut off his balls and have him arrested." ("No wonder the F.B.I. can't catch terrorists," a woman I met said. "They can't even get Buddy.")

Rhode Island is sometimes known as the Louisiana of the North. In my time there, I was continually reminded of Willie Stark, the Huey Long-inspired political boss in Robert Penn Warren's "All the King's Men," and of Stark's assertion that there is nobody in public life whose rectitude is truly spotless and uncompromised: "Man is conceived in sin and born in corruption, and he passeth from the stink of the didie to the stench of the shroud. There is always something." Such faith in the inevitability of stain is shared equally by the lawmen, the agents and prosecutors, who hunt corrupt politicians. But the law is technical; much of the dirt that might be collected against a suspect is irrelevant to the particular charges of a case or inadmissible under the rules of the court. The most surprising thing about the Cianci trial, as it gathered steam and wore on this summer, was how thin the specific evidence against the Mayor's misconduct appeared to be. That men in his orbit had created a stew of corruption in his name was apparent from the outset. Yet, day after day, as I sat through the proceedings, or followed them in the Providence *Journal*, I found myself scribbling in my notebooks the word "nothing."

Rhode Islanders being a seafaring people, a wooden oar stood alongside the state flag behind the witness box in Judge Torres's courtroom. The flag hung limp, yet was draped in such a way that the lone word "Hope," which underscores the state seal, was legible. Torres, a small, meticulous man, ran a strict and sober court, and the unflagging sanity and impartiality with which he conducted the dispiriting proceedings served as a reminder that nobility remains an option in public life. The crimes alleged in United States of America v. Cianci were lowly, but in the courtroom the air was gentlemanly, and without antics, although Rose, the prosecutor, did have a habit, when the defense took the stand, of making bizarre, writhing faces, clutching at his head as if in torment, and emitting phlegmy gurgles from his nose and throat. On more than one occasion, Torres ordered Rose to sit still and refrain from snorting. In the hallway during breaks, Cianci and his three co-defendants hardly acknowledged one another. The Mayor liked to take the opportunity to give reporters praise or scoldings for their most recent stories.

By the time the trial got under way, on April 22nd, six people had already pleaded or been found guilty in related cases. The government had saved Cianci for last in order that those who had already been convicted might be compelled by the prospect of reduced sentences to testify. Several were, and the risk of depending on such witnesses—whose capacity for falsehood was well established, and who had, in many cases, originally lied vigorously to the same F.B.I. agents and prosecutors with whom they were now coöperating—was somewhat counterbalanced by the fact that they had all either been appointed to city jobs by Cianci or had cut their crooked deals with Cianci appointees. If they weren't believed, their presence in the courtroom would nonetheless reinforce the prosecution's overarching contention under RICO: that the Mayor's people were criminals, and that he was responsible.

One of Cianci's co-defendants, Eddie Voccola, was a known associate of mobsters. He had a long record, much rehearsed in the Providence *Journal*, of convictions for such crimes as insurance fraud and assaulting insurance investigators. (He once drove a Connecticut man from his auto-body shop, shouting, "This is Rhode Island. I'll blow up your car and kill you.") He had also been accused of harassing a witness in an earlier case by having a bouquet of black spray-painted roses and a disembodied animal tongue delivered to her, and by leaving the phone numbers of funeral homes on her pager. Voccola's alleged involvement with the Cianci gang involved his old auto-body shop—a dismal, unventilated firetrap, next door to a strip club, far from public transport, and frequented by rats—which he had leased to the School Department as a registration center for new students, at nearly twice the market rate. He was accused of laundering the rent checks and kicking money back to City Hall, and Rose depicted the matter not only as a federal offense but as a crime against the children of Providence, whose schools have sadly failed to get the renaissance attention that its zoo has.

Rose argued from time to time that the case against Cianci revealed "a scheme to defraud the citizens of Providence of the intangible value of honest public service," and one of the trial's big moments came when a former Providence police chief admitted on the witness stand that he had given some of his officers the answers to exams for promotions. But this had no direct bearing on any charge against Cianci, and, as a rule, it was hard to detect, in the scenarios of municipal misconduct developed by the prosecution, any specific injury or injustice done to the public. In at least one instance, some good had even come of it—for a young man named Christopher Ise and, arguably, for the city of Providence. Ise, a historic preservationist by training, was working at a bookstore in a mall when he was approached by David Ead, a city tax official who knew Ise's wife. Ead offered to arrange a meeting with Cianci, who would, Ead said, fix Ise up with a position on the city payroll in exchange for a five-thousand-dollar contribution to the Mayor's campaign fund. Ise was uneasy with this scheme, but he agreed to it. Ead instructed him not to say a word about money to the Mayor, explaining that he would deliver the money himself after the job was secured.

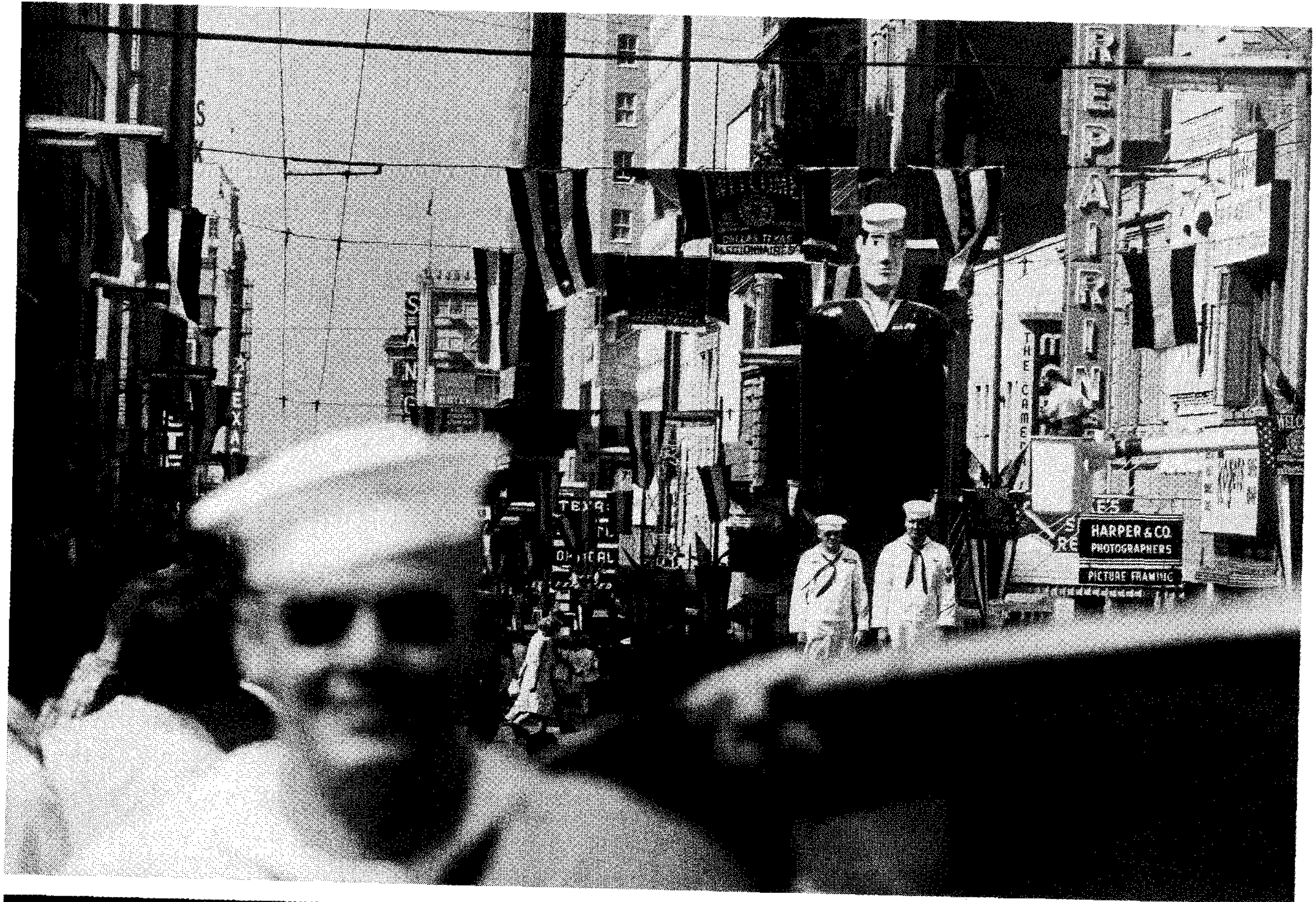
So Cianci met Ise, and studied his

AT THE MUSEUMS

ROAD TRIP

The sixties began in 1964. The Beatles were on "The Ed Sullivan Show" that year. President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act and ordered air strikes against North Vietnam. Cassius Clay became Muhammad Ali. Bob Dylan released "The Times They Are A-Changin'." But American life in 1964 as documented by the photographer Garry Winogrand looked pretty much the way it had in the fifties. Winogrand drove across the country for several months, taking nearly twenty thousand pictures, some of which became his most famous images. For "Winogrand 1964" (Arena Editions; $60), Trudy Wilner Stack, a former curator at the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona, which houses the vast Winogrand archives (he died in 1984), has selected and sequenced nearly two hundred photographs from his trip, most of which have never been seen before. Several of them are, startlingly, in color. Winogrand's subjects are rarely engaged in any identifiable political activity, although one of them carries a Goldwater poster and George Wallace is seen getting out of a car at a football game in Dallas, and a girl in San Francisco seems to be making a peace sign. Most of the people in the photographs are preoccupied with getting across the parking lot or having lunch or just looking at something outside the frame. They often have their backs turned. Winogrand used a Leica with a wide-angle lens that made it possible to include a lot of information while not necessarily focussing on one subject. The result leaves the viewer off balance, uneasy. Something's happening, but we don't know what it is. The photographs will be exhibited at the International Center of Photography starting September 13th.

—*Sharon DeLano*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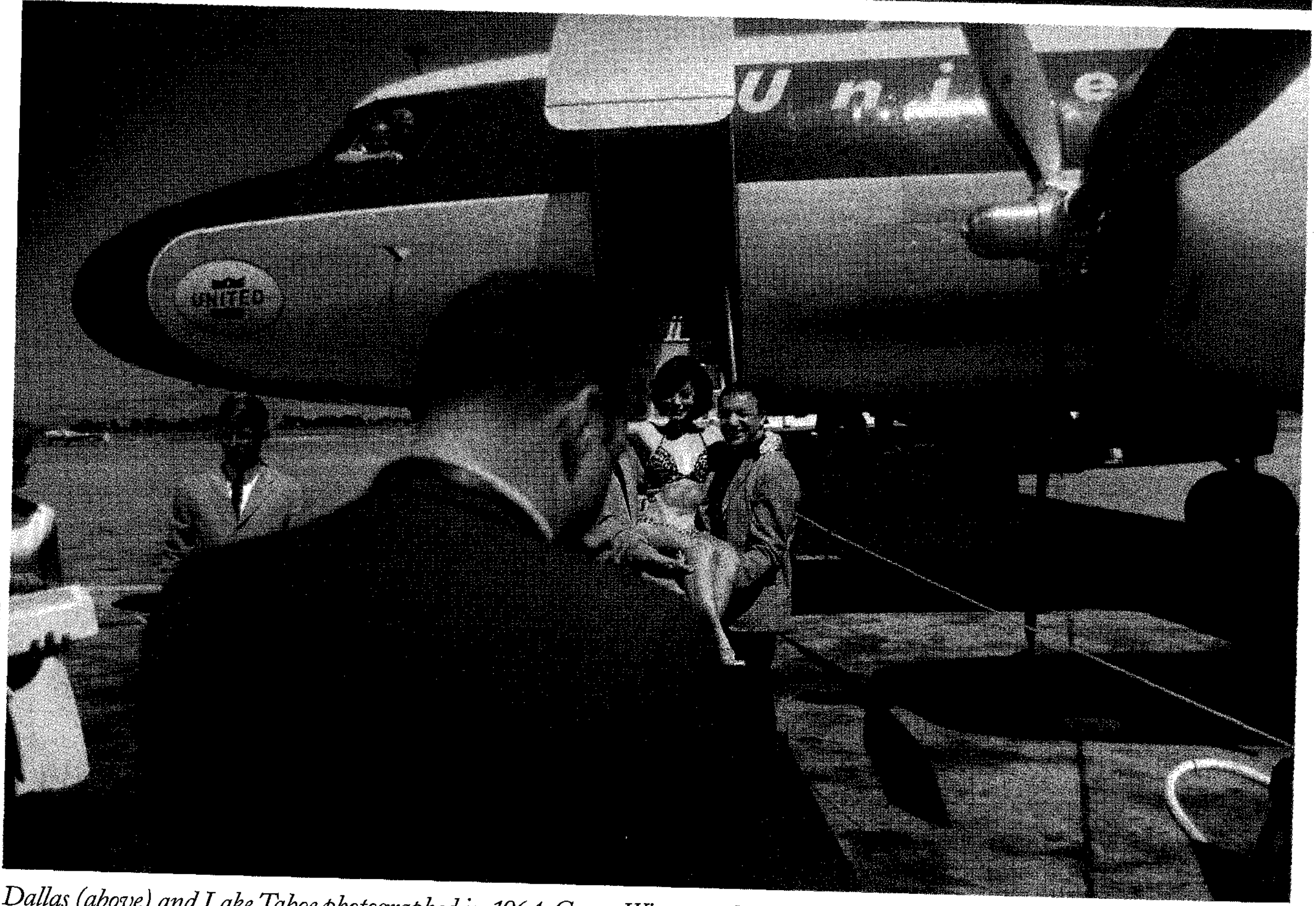
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©1984 ESTATE OF GARRY WINOGRAND

Dallas (above) and Lake Tahoe photographed in 1964. Garry Winogrand, a New Yorker, was fascinated by Texas and California.

résumé, and began calling his references, who spoke highly of the young man. Cianci then made a call to someone in the Providence Preservation Society, a private, nonprofit organization. When that approach failed, he called the City Planning Department, and was told that there were no jobs. Finally, the Mayor persuaded the planners to give Ise a temporary, hourly-wage gig. Ise had hoped for better, but he went to work and before long had so impressed his employers that he was hired full time. Ead made sure to collect the five thousand dollars, and he claimed that he had taken it to the Mayor, only to be told to take it to someone else. When he testified against Cianci, Ead had already pleaded guilty to six extortion-related felony charges, including the Ise bribe. (He was later rewarded for his testimony by being spared jail time; he'd faced as much as a hundred and twenty years.) The person to whom he said he gave the money at City Hall was tried separately and acquitted. Ead's word was the only evidence presented of Cianci's involvement in the bribe, and one could not escape the suspicion that Ead had been operating as a renegade, exploiting his connection to the Mayor and pocketing the money.

Following the money was much easier in the matter of a group of twelve towing companies that did business with the Police Department. In the eighties, when Cianci was out of office, Joseph Paolino was the mayor, and the tow-truck operators had agreed to contribute two thousand dollars each to his campaign fund. Paolino's administration has a reputation for being comparatively clean, and there was never any suggestion that this arrangement was improper. But, according to testimony in court, when Cianci returned to power, his money man, Frank Corrente, told one of the tow-truck operators, "It's a new game in town," and demanded five thousand a year from each company. The tow-truck operators balked, conferred, and agreed to give three thousand. Never mind that new state laws forbade businesses to contribute directly to municipal campaigns and restricted individual donations to a thousand dollars a year. The tow-truck operators could make their payments by writing a personal check, and finding two other people to do the same in exchange for cash. Slippery as that might sound, it was legal and, anyway, not part of the case. What was at issue was extortion, and although no tow-truck operator had ever suffered for failing to keep up with his tithe, Corrente had clearly been well out of line with the law. There was no evidence, however, to show any direct involvement on Cianci's part in his campaign's gradual collection of a quarter of a million dollars from the tow-truck operators.

SECRET

On one of those birthdays of which I've had so many
I was walking home through the park from a party,

pleased with myself for not mentioning the birthday—
why hear congratulations for doing nothing but live?

The birthday was my secret with myself and gave me,
walking under all those trees, such a strong feeling of

satisfaction that everything else fell away: party sounds,
the hostess who stared and as suddenly disappeared

on seeing her husband walk in with a young(er) friend;
another guest examining garment labels in the room

where I went to leave my jacket; one of two waiters
balancing a trayful of foot-high champagne glasses;

a beelike buzz of voices I ought to have enjoyed
but heard as foreign babble, so remote it was from

a birthday, so empty of import nothing would remain.
I got my jacket, waved from the hall, pressed "Down."

In summer the park, for an hour or so before night,
is at its greenest, a whole implicit proposition

of green leaves, a triumph of leaves enfolding me
that day in a green intimacy so trustworthy I told

them my secret. "It's my birthday," I said out loud
before turning away to cross the avenue.

—*Dorothea Tanning*

The matter that came to be known as the Freitas lots looked more troubling for Cianci. Antonio Freitas was the air-conditioning man who had volunteered to go undercover for the F.B.I., and who was jailed at the time of Cianci's indictment for beating his estranged wife and former girlfriend in succession. He was the star witness in Plunder Dome, having been transformed by his agent handlers into a walking recording studio. He passed out F.B.I.-supplied bribe money to city officials, and it was he who had filmed Frank Corrente taking a bribe. A tax collector named Joseph Pannone (since jailed) was his initial contact, and through him Freitas fetched up with Ead, with whom he sought to arrange the purchase of some vacant lots owned by the city. Once again, Ead offered to serve as a go-between with the Mayor, arranging the deal and carrying the dirty money. The plan seemed to be progressing smoothly, and the deal was ready to go down when Ead learned that the property had been sold to someone else. "Tell Tony I owe him one," Cianci said, a line that Rose considered incriminating—chockablock with hints of conspiracy. ("If every politician who said that to a constituent was charged, we'd be in anarchy," Cianci's lawyer retorted.)

It seemed to me that the story of the Freitas lots was really a story of how the system in Providence had worked properly, despite Freitas's effort to make it bend to his will with F.B.I. money. The land in question had been sold legitimately, without recourse to a bribe, much less to mayoral intercession, at a lower price than Freitas had been prepared to pay. Indeed, in all the tapes played at the trial, nobody but Ead and Pannone is ever heard asking for a bribe. When Frank Corrente received cash, the money was thrust on him unsolicited, and Corrente said that he didn't expect or want it. Corrente didn't give the money back, much less call the police, but his behavior suggests how hard it was for the F.B.I. to find the evidence it sought to sustain Rose's claim that City Hall was so rotten with gangsters that nothing could be achieved by legitimate means, but "*anything* could be had for a price."

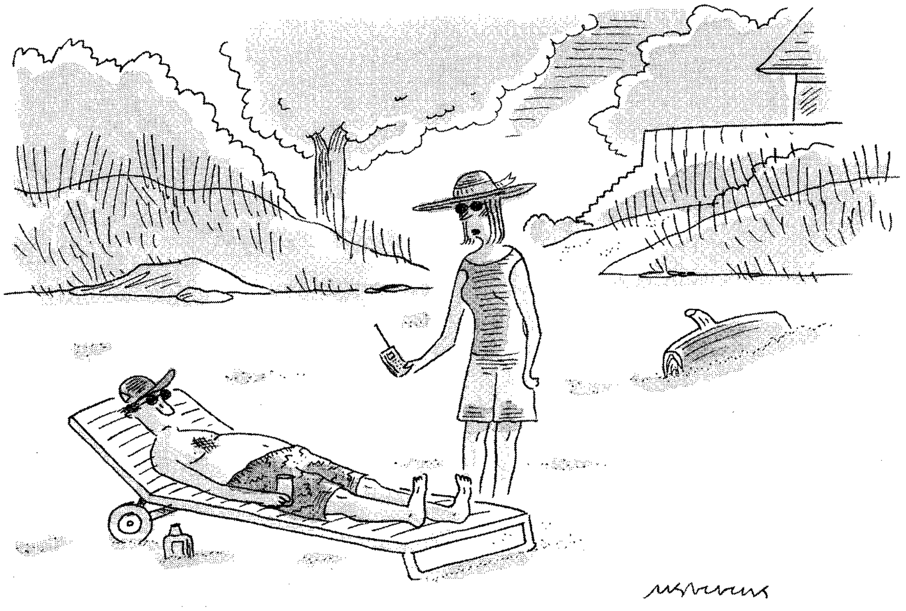
In the end, the only element of the government's case that showed Cianci to have used his power heavy-handedly dealt with the most overblown charge. Early in his first administration, in the mid-seventies, Cianci had applied for membership in the University Club—a venerable institution of Brahminic Providence society that sits on College Hill, alongside the Rhode Island School of Design and just below Brown. Cianci's application was seconded by a United States senator and two members of the Rhode Island Supreme Court, but his acceptance into the club was vetoed by someone who didn't like him, and—such are the icy rules of the place, apparently—he learned of his rejection only indirectly. Twenty years later, in 1998, he noticed that the University Club had applied for city permits for variances to get around certain building codes in order to complete a million-dollar renovation. The issuance of such variances is a standard matter, but discretionary, since they amount to an exemption from the law. Whether or not the city board that handles such matters would have granted the University Club's request without complication is a matter of dispute, but, in the event, Cianci intervened and in a brusque and bullying manner told his appointees to turn the club down. He is said to have railed about closing the place, ticketing cars parked in front of it, and revoking its liquor license.

In one of several meetings with a representative for the club, Cianci delivered what was surely the most memorable line to be heard during the course of his trial: "Be careful. The toe you stepped on yesterday may be connected to the ass you have to kiss today." A delegation was soon sent to City Hall to inform him that it was the desire of the University Club to give him a complimentary honorary lifetime membership. Cianci asked if it was for him or for the office of the mayor. For you, he was told. He thanked his visitors, and shortly afterward the club was granted its variances.

A University Club membership carried a four-thousand-dollar initiation fee and annual dues of an additional fifteen hundred—which is to say it fits the requirement of federal extortion law that some "thing of value" has been obtained by the alleged extorter. There was, however, nothing in the government's case to suggest that Cianci had any intention or desire to wring a membership out of the club. (It's well known that he doesn't care to pay for meals, which members have to do, and he says he has used his membership only twice since receiving it.) Indeed, Cianci's lawyer, Richard Egbert, described the University Club charge as nothing less than an attempt to criminalize "mayoral pique."

The prosecution presented its case for seven weeks, and, when it rested, Judge Torres dismissed Eddie Voccola, saying that there was insufficient evidence to sustain a case against him. Two charges against Cianci—one involving extortion, and the witness-tampering charge—were also dropped at that time. The defense's presentation, which lasted only three days, consisted almost entirely of discrediting the government's witnesses. "If you appreciate sitting here and being lied to . . . while they're trying to bring down a mayor, O.K., then, fine," Egbert told the jury.

"Renaissance city or city for sale?" Richard Rose demanded over and over in his summation to the jury on the last day of the trial, and his voice ascended with each reiteration. But the case was not about the Renaissance City. It was about a handful of specific transactions. The jury deliberated for nine days, and in the matter of the University Club it took a half day more. Cianci's two remaining codefendants, Richard Autiello, a tow-truck operator, and Corrente, were found guilty on three and six counts, respectively, and also of RICO conspiracy, but the jury did not believe the government had proved that Cianci had committed a single specific criminal act. Of the thirty counts on the original indictment, twenty-seven were still in place, and Cianci was acquitted of twenty-six of them. Nonetheless, he was convicted of RICO conspiracy—of being the godfather of the Cianci gang,



"It's New York. It wants you back."

"I love real estate. It's so tangible."

• •

and therefore accountable for the crimes of all its members. As a juror later explained to the Providence *Journal*, finding the Mayor not guilty of so many charges did not mean believing that he was innocent.

Leaving the courtroom, I caught up with Cianci, descending the stairs. "Bizarre ending," I said. "They didn't get you for anything, but they hit you for everything." He reminded me that the verdict was tentative: Torres still had to rule on defense motions that challenged the solidity of the government's case under RICO. The judge had called the law confusing, and would not decide for at least a week whether to sustain Cianci's conviction or overturn it. Either way, Cianci was allowed to stay in office until his sentencing, which was set for September 6th. In the meantime, he said, "I was found guilty of being mayor."

The jury's verdict was delivered on June 24th, a Monday, and the filing deadline for candidates to enter this year's mayoral election was Wednesday afternoon. Cianci had always said that he would run again—or, rather, that he had never stopped running—and now, while everyone was in suspense about whether or not Torres would reverse the verdict, he had to decide whether to throw his hat in the ring. On the evening after he was convicted by the jury, Cianci went to the graduation of Central High School to speak and to hand out some of his marinara sauce and some scholarships, and when he appeared, followed by reporters, a crowd of two thousand stood, cheered, and chanted, "Bud-dee! Bud-dee!" He did not doubt that he could win if he was free to run, but he waited until midday Wednesday to announce his decision at a press conference. Even then, he spoke at some length before he got to the point, singing the wonders of Providence—"my life . . . my passion"—and its people and the love that bound him to them. He recited a litany of the city's improvements and achievements, as he has done incessantly for a decade, and he said, "The dreams we dared to dream a generation ago have become the magnificent reality of today." It sounded like a farewell address, and it was. "It's time for me to move on, personally and for the good of this city."

Cianci spoke for nearly ninety minutes. When he became mayor, he said, "the only people who would come to the downtown were the national association of freight forwarders—they loved the railroad tracks. . . . Even the Bible Society moved out of downtown." Now, he said, "we have restored the hope and pride of every citizen." And he plugged for more change. He called for a sweeping reorganization of Rhode Island's municipal bureaucracies. He talked of creating a research institute on cities, finishing up a new performing- and visual-arts high school, and reclaiming the city's waterfront. Cianci's incantatory lists of municipal projects can make the mind bleary. Once, during a similar performance on "Imus in the Morning," Imus cut him off, asking, "Are you on amphetamines?" This time, he cut himself off. "And I'm not running for office," he said abruptly. He acknowledged that he might go to jail, but he made it sound more as if he'd just decided to retire and get a life. He loved being mayor, but he said that it was tough on a man to go to "all these small events they expect you to go to, and to try to be witty and try to be funny and try to be meaningful and try to be helpful."

Three weeks later, Judge Torres upheld the jury's verdict. He said that RICO obliged him to interpret the evidence in the light most favorable to the prosecution. "Torres knew the case would be appealed," Maureen Moakley, the political scientist at Rhode Island University, said to me. "But you couldn't help feeling that he was chafing against RICO. I mean, RICO was designed to prosecute people who are capable of violent and murderous behavior. It gives prosecutors leeway because these Mafia guys are seriously dangerous. When you start to apply it to small-time crooks, which is, at best, what Buddy and his boys were accused of being, it's really worrying. And then there is the question of the best use of taxpayers' money. I'd like to know how much this trial cost. How much did it cost to carry out what was to a large degree a vendetta?"

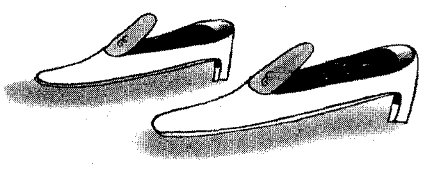
Meg Curran, the United States Attorney, celebrated the judge's decision by declaring that "the true renaissance" could now begin in Providence. "I don't remember seeing her when we were going out trying to sell bonds," Cianci said to me when I went to see him at City Hall on an afternoon of fierce thunderstorms. He sat behind a big, appealingly cluttered desk, in his shirtsleeves, framed by a window behind which greenish-black clouds swirled. He was no longer under a gag order, but he had made a request for a new trial, and was preparing an appeal, and he wanted to talk about the city, which he did for more than an hour, covering almost exactly the same ground he had in his press conference, in many passages almost verbatim. But though he put energy into his words, the fervor was missing. He sounded as if he were talking to distract himself, which made sense—it now seemed inevitable that he'd be sentenced to jail after Labor Day.

Eventually, the conversation wound around to what was truly on his mind. "You have to have faith that you can win an appeal," he said. "But I don't have any dreams—or I know what reality is, and I just have to do the job that I'm here to do till I go get sentenced." This reality still seemed to feel unreal to him. "I have a lot of pride in the city," he said, "and I also have remorse that it came to this, because it shouldn't have come to this and maybe I should have been watching more closely. I don't know." He understood himself to be a big-picture man, an orchestrator, the source and energizer of visions, and for the rest he had a city workforce of more than seven thousand. "If there were people, on a small level or whatever, shaking people down, I certainly didn't know about it," he said. It was alien to him to think that he should reproach himself for that. "I guess it's on your watch, so you're responsible—that's what it comes down to," he said, but he added, "Did I have control of it? No."

"We got the cockroach," the F.B.I. informant, Antonio Freitas, told me over the phone. We met for dinner a few nights later. "It was fun," he said of the year he had spent undercover, strapped with as many as five hidden recording devices, ensnaring city officials, and of the week he'd spent on the witness stand in the Cianci trial. He described his work for the government as "a performance," and said that he and Agent Aiken had "a lot of laughs" at the stupidity of their targets. "They think they're smart, and I was smarter than them all, including the Mayor," he said.

Freitas is a small, moonfaced man of fifty-three with a tidy helmet of short white hair. He immigrated to America from Portugal and settled in Rhode Island in 1963, when he was fourteen. So he had lived as a youth under the dictatorship of Antonio Oliveira Salazar. "It didn't bother me," he said. "I was not held back." In fact, he told me, "I liked it, because it was an eye for an eye. If you killed somebody, and there was witnesses, you also will die. It was that simple." He said he didn't even think of Salazar as a dictator, just a "very nice guy." But Buddy Cianci, he said, "is equal to Saddam Hussein—no different, the closest human in this world." Freitas also called Cianci "a Hitler who pushed people around, who hurt people," and he told me, "Somebody had to stop this guy. That's the way I look at it. I had the guts to do it, the balls to do it." He said he didn't hate Cianci, but he hated what Cianci did to people. "This is us and them. This is the good guys against the bad guys." In his view, the people at City Hall "didn't get up to work, they got up to steal," and he said, "These are thieves. Thieves, thieves, thieves. Read my lips. All they've done is ask for money, for money, for money. O.K.?"

Freitas had begun working with the F.B.I. after he was rejected in a bid to lease a building he owned to the Providence School Department, to replace Eddie Voccola's old auto-body shop as a student registration center. Freitas was the lowest bidder, but the city had stuck with Voccola. "I said, 'You know what?' " he told me. " 'They're a bunch of thieves. It's a fix.' " Nevertheless, his fury seemed all out of proportion. At one point, he told me about a series of catastrophes that had punctuated his life over the past quarter century. He'd had car crashes, he'd been run over, he'd been blown up in a gas explosion, he'd been squashed by a "four-hundred-pound woman" falling down a restaurant staircase. "If it was now, I would say they were trying to kill me," he said. When I asked about his arrests for domestic violence, he told me that the story had come out all wrong. It was the women who had attacked him—his estranged wife (his third) came from behind with a loose-leaf binder, and his ex-girlfriend, a karate teacher, also struck when he had his back turned—and when he pleaded no contest, he said, he didn't understand that that meant guilty. On the other hand, he recalled being so upset with his wife at one point that he told a friend, "I feel like grabbing a fuckin' pipe and hit it through her mouth and break her teeth and her boyfriend's teeth, so she'll just leave me alone."



Freitas said that since Cianci's conviction, he was feeling better about the future. "I have a lot of power," he said, "and it feels great to have the power, to have the influence over people that were untouchable, or that thought they were untouchable." Freitas was not paid for his work for the F.B.I.; he didn't want to be. He wanted justice, and he felt that he'd got it. "The F.B.I. was after the Mayor going back to the eighties," he told me, and now, he said, "I want to be remembered as the person that cleaned corruption in Rhode Island, and turned the government into an honest government." Then he began complaining that the city was being overrun by people on welfare—"They bring the kids, they go to school, they use our fire department, they use the police, it's a tremendous expense"—and he returned to this theme in the car after dinner: "Look at these streets, garbage and welfare—it's blacks mostly—and rats, we're infested with rats in Providence."

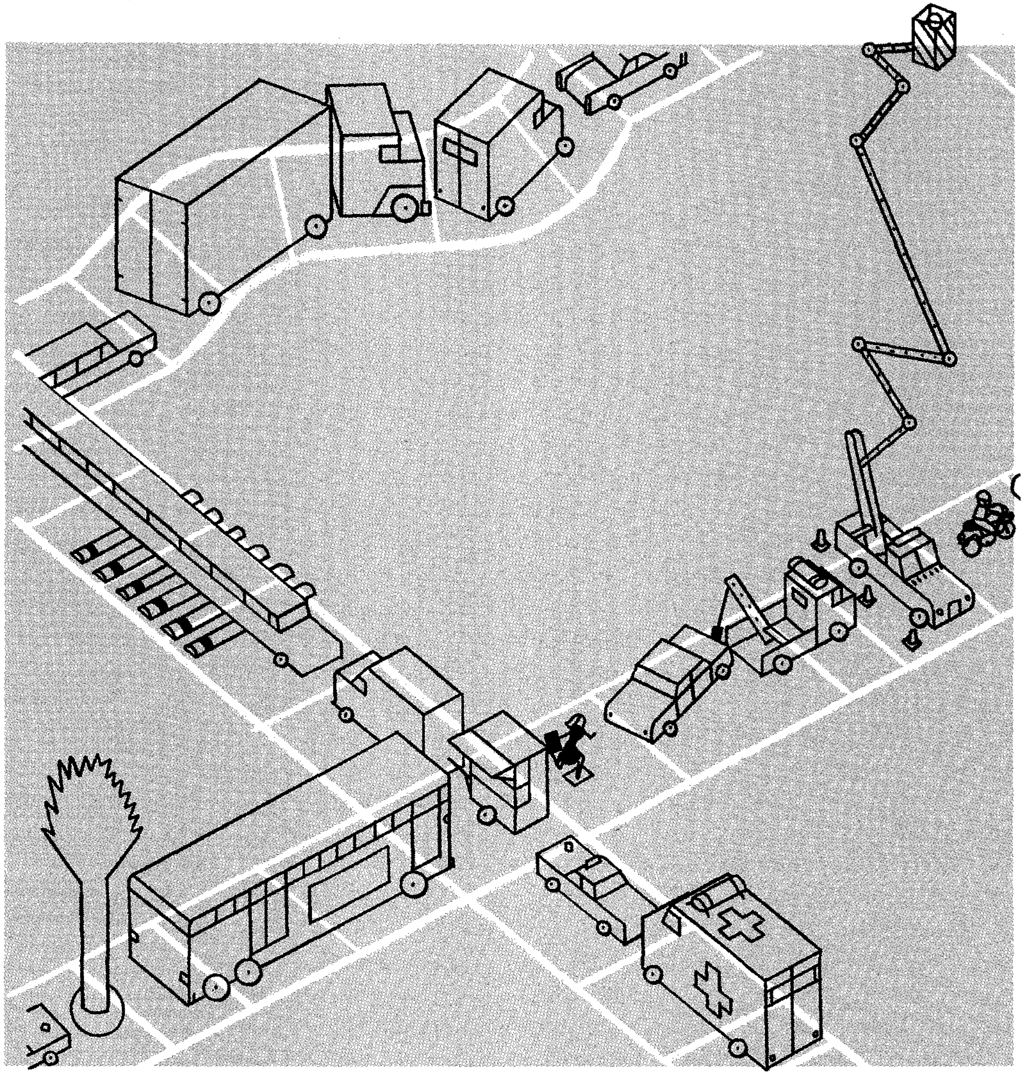
Freitas had gone after the Mayor as an agent of the federal government, but he seemed to me more like an agent of fate. As I listened to his story, I was reminded of Cianci's warning that the toe you step on may be connected to the ass you'll need to kiss. During my meeting with the Mayor, I had asked him whether that thought characterized the spirit in which he'd run City Hall. "I don't think that characterizes this particular administration," he said. "I think that characterizes, in many ways, life." ♦

DEPT. OF MOTOR VEHICLES

THE SLOW LANE

Can anyone solve the problem of traffic?

BY JOHN SEABROOK



LAURENT CILLUFFO

Shannon Sohn, the blue-eyed, freckled young helicopter reporter for New York's Channel 7 "Eyewitness News," was sitting in the office at the back of the hangar at Linden Airport, in northern New Jersey, fanning herself with a newspaper and waiting for the traffic to get bad. The office looked like a place where people keep odd hours. The couch had body-length indentations in its cushions, and soft-drink cans and coffee cups were spilling out of the wastebasket.

It was early in the afternoon on Friday, May 24th, or "getaway day," as Channel 7 called it—the start of the Memorial Day weekend and the traditional beginning of the summer traffic season. On days like this, all the drivers who commute in and out of New York City on a typical weekday are joined by the drivers who live in the city and use their cars only on weekends, producing the kind of chaos that traffic reporters in Atlanta or Los Angeles take for granted but New York reporters don't experience every day. If there were truly appalling delays, Sohn had a shot at leading the six-o'clock news. "As a helicopter reporter, that's what you want," she said. "To be first." Helicopter reporters in New York don't have the luxury of following high-speed car chases—there are too many bridges and tunnels in the way. Here a terrible traffic jam is as good as it gets. But would today's traffic be bad enough?

Since September 11th, as anyone who drives in New York knows, traffic patterns have changed. Congestion cleared up when Mayor Giuliani used his special emergency powers to restrict bridge and tunnel crossings into Manhattan below Sixtieth Street. Not since the Second World War had traffic in the city flowed as freely. In April, restrictions were lifted on some crossings, but morning-rush-hour restrictions on lone drivers entering Manhattan remained in effect below Fourteenth Street. Although the cleanup operation at Ground Zero has now ended, Mayor Bloomberg—who, during his campaign, promised to improve the quality of life in New York by making the city less auto-reliant—says that he will keep the restrictions in place while the reconstruction of lower Manhattan continues. Traffic has been getting steadily worse since April, but it's still less crowded in the city now than it was a year ago.

The phone rang in the office. It was the Channel 7 news desk, in Manhattan. The police scanner was reporting an incident that had shut down all the northbound lanes on the New York State Thruway. Sohn and her pilot, Arthur Anderson, hurried outside and climbed aboard NewsCopter 7. Anderson gave me a quick review of the emergency procedures, explaining that if we had to ditch he preferred to do so on land, not in the water. As we took off, Sohn unwrapped a lollipop. She was fourteen weeks pregnant, and relied on cherry-flavored Charms to ward off motion sickness in the chopper. Grape worked better, but it turned her tongue purple.

Linden Airport is near Elizabeth, New Jersey, and just south of Newark airport. As we headed northwest across Newark's sprawling runways, Sohn gathered information from the traffic-news desk. Around noon, a twelve-year-old boy called Scottie Van Dunk, of Mahwah, New Jersey, whose class had been let out of school early, had ridden his bike to a section of the Ramapo River known as "The Forty Foot," a well-known swimming hole just across the New York state line. At 2 P.M., the boy's body had been discovered at the spot where the river runs beside the Thruway. He had drowned, and police officers had shut down the highway for the recovery operation.

By the time we arrived above the scene, at 2:15 P.M., the traffic on the northbound Thruway was backed up for several miles beyond the I-287 interchange. Drivers who had been zipping along the highway minutes before were now trapped and unhappy, and their previously limitless sense of possibility had shrunk to a single option: whether to change lanes. The idea that the delay up ahead might be the result of a disaster far greater than anyone's personal inconvenience rarely occurs to the driver stuck in traffic.

NewsCopter 7's remote-controlled belly-mounted camera roved the river's edge, looking for a body or some other pitiless image of tragedy for the folks at home, but found only a couple of men from the Stony Point Fire Department, stowing rescue gear. Van Dunk's body had been taken away just before we arrived. Sohn directed Anderson to get some pictures of the traffic jam on I-87 and I-287, but said she doubted that this tie-up would be enough to make the six-o'clock news: "For that to happen, we need some really, really bad traffic."

Since 1970, the population of the United States has grown by forty per cent, while the number of registered vehicles has increased by nearly a hundred per cent—in other words, cars have proliferated more than twice as fast as people have. During this same period, road capacity increased by six per cent. If these trends continue through 2020, every day will resemble a getaway day, with its mixture of commuters, truckers, and recreational drivers, who take to the road without regard for traditional peak travel times, producing congestion all day long: trucks that can't make deliveries on time, people who can't get to or from work, air quality that continues to deteriorate as commerce suffers and our over-all geopolitical position weakens because we are forced to become ever more dependent on foreign oil. This is the way the world ends: not with a bang but a traffic jam.

What can you do about the traffic? Take the train? The train may be out of commission; Amtrak, the nation's passenger rail service, may be out of business before too long. Fly? Airlines are cutting flights and raising prices to offset heavy losses. Manage traffic better? There are many schemes for managing traffic, but not very many practical ways to reduce the number of vehicles on the roads. Even if people have an alternative to driving, as do many New Yorkers, over time an ever larger number of commuters choose to drive. Today, about 3.6 million people make their way into Manhattan's "hub" (the area below Sixtieth Street) each workday—about the same number who came on an average day fifty years ago. In 1948, six hundred and fifty thousand of the commuters drove; fifty years later, more than 1.3 million of them drove, and most of them drove alone.

It's not enough to build public transportation; you also have to get people to use it, either by making trains and buses more convenient or by prohibiting some people from driving during peak periods. But in the United States restricting people from using their automobiles whenever they like has always been politically difficult, and Mayor Bloomberg's efforts to do so are controversial. The new restrictions have brought joy to many of the city's residents—New York is the only city in the United States in which the majority of households don't own an automobile—but they have been a source of outrage for the parking-garage industry, restaurant and theatre owners, retailers, labor groups, and some local politicians. Traffic is bad, but, as some New Yorkers have discovered, a lack of traffic may be worse. "I think it's destroying the fabric of New York," Greg Susick, senior vice-president of Central Parking, told the *Times* in November. After a Christmas season in New York in which the traditional Five Days of Gridlock saw only light congestion, the Metropolitan Parking Association began investigating possible legal action against the city for maintaining the lone-driver restrictions.

If New York could do something permanent about its traffic, maybe other cities around the country could, too. In Atlanta, the time that the average commuter spends annually in traffic rose from twenty-five hours in 1992 to seventy hours in 2000. Los Angeles has the worst traffic in the country, but San Francisco, Houston, and Seattle are challenging L.A. for this distinction. These cities may find it necessary to impose restrictions on driving when traffic becomes even worse—much worse—as it inevitably will. That is why what happens in New York's experiment in traffic control is so important. Will New York, which is planning

"We're too well connected for jail time, but I worry a little about middle management."

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to build a state-of-the-art transit center in lower Manhattan, be the first city to implement a state-of-the-art traffic policy? Or will this period in the city's traffic history—a period in which the automobile is a privileged guest—end in the coming months, defeated by our insatiable desire to drive?

At 12:15 P.M. on getaway Friday, Rudy Popolizio, the director of systems engineering for New York City's Department of Transportation, was in the D.O.T.'s Traffic Management Center watching the city's roads for signs of trouble. The word "jam" was first used to describe automotive congestion by the *Saturday Evening Post*, in 1910, in a reference to New York City. (The British word "blockage," a holdover from horse-and-carriage days, was too civil-sounding to convey the awful noise and smell of automobiles densely packed into a tight space.) Because of the limited space and the dimensions of its grid, the heart of midtown Manhattan can accommodate only nine thousand moving vehicles without succumbing to gridlock: the congested traffic on one of the cross streets blocks the traffic on an avenue, which in turn clogs the next cross street. A bad case of gridlock can tie up all the streets in midtown within minutes, which is why engineers like Popolizio keep close watch on the city's roads, especially on days like this.

Traffic seemed to be flowing well, Popolizio reported. He suspected that a lot of people hadn't gone to work. "We may see an early peak today—around two o'clock," he told me over the phone. "But so far traffic is O.K. I'm looking at the Fifty-ninth Street Bridge camera, and traffic is moving well."

The Traffic Management Center is in a large windowless bunker in a nondescript white brick building just off Queens Plaza, in Long Island City. I had met Popolizio there when I visited several months earlier. He and the other engineers work in the glow of thirty-four large TV monitors, each displaying changing images transmitted from the hundred and thirty remote-controlled closed-circuit cameras that the city and state D.O.T.s have installed at troublesome intersections within the city and at common choke points outside it. Traffic cams reduce the D.O.T.'s response time to accidents—the cause of fifty per cent of all traffic jams. In theory, the cams, available online at www.metrocommute.com, are supposed to provide an advance-warning system for the public, but, as a practical matter, most drivers aren't surfing the Web, you hope, while they're behind the wheel.

The most effective and equitable means of managing all the different users of the city's streets—bicyclists, in-line skaters, scooters, pushcarts, pedal cabs, and pedestrians, as well as drivers—is the traffic signal. "With the traffic signal, everyone's interests are reduced to red and green," Popolizio said. "It's 'You get yours, and I get mine.'" The electric traffic signal is an old technology, devised by an African-American inventor, Garrett Morgan, in 1914 (he also came up with an early version of the gas mask) and first deployed in the city in 1924, on Broadway; today, about twenty-seven hundred intersections in Manhattan are "signalized." Almost all signals in Manhattan run on ninety-second intervals, and over the decades the D.O.T. has steadily improved and refined the way the signals work together. "In a grid this tight, you can't afford to have a signal thinking on its own," Popolizio said. (Two weeks ago, a computer glitch caused dozens of signals around the city to start thinking on their own, and the result was chaos.) The D.O.T. times the sequence of the lights on most of the avenues progressively; and even if you don't know that the signals on, say, Ninth Avenue turn green at six-second intervals, you soon develop an instinct for just how much green you have left on the signal ahead of you before your progress is halted by red. E. B. White, writing in this magazine in the late nineteen-twenties, noted how quickly the citizenry had incorporated the newly invented timing progressions into its inner life. "These machinal rhythms are really very subtle," he wrote. "It is by such nice devices that man supplants the urge of hours and tides and the phases of a moon which he never sees."

More than half of the eleven and a half thousand signals in the five boroughs are connected to computers in the management center, and the city's traffic engineers can manipulate the timing of those signals throughout the day. During the morning and evening rush hours, for example, Sixth Avenue in midtown gets sixty seconds of the green time while the crosstown streets get thirty seconds, but during the middle of the day, when there's more crosstown traffic, the engineers change the signal timing so that both Sixth Avenue and the crosstown streets get forty-five seconds of green. Every one of Manhattan's signals is represented by a tiny light on a forty-foot-long tableau in the management center, and the lights are connected in real time to the signals on the streets. The model allows you to watch the sequences of lights sweeping along Broadway, or to study the subtlety of the signal pattern in Times Square. It represents the triumph of traffic engineering over traffic: a perfectly designed system, without drivers to mess it up. "We use very few left-turn signals in the city," Popolizio pointed out. "It's not like in the suburbs, where you have people going every which way in the intersections."

The day I had visited the management center, in March, there wasn't much traffic to manage. With all the rush-hour restrictions still in effect, the roads in the city and outside it were quieter than usual; an engineer had tuned one of the monitors to daytime TV. Finally, at the end of the morning rush hour, a crew from the city's Department of Environmental Protection stopped its truck in the middle of the southbound F.D.R. Drive, just south of Ninety-sixth Street, so that it blocked two lanes. The men got out, ambled over to the side of the road, and began peering into drains. Cars behind the truck immediately stopped, and, thanks to the D.O.T.'s cameras, we got to see the jam forming, travelling backward at eight miles an hour, a rolling wave of thwarted commuter desire which soon reached the Triborough Bridge. Meanwhile, a police car pulled up, its lights flashing, in the left lane of the northbound F.D.R., and the cops went over to see what the heck the D.E.P. was up to. It was a pygmy traffic jam, in the general scheme of things, but it was the only thing happening that morning, and the D.O.T. engineers got pretty excited. "What are those D.E.P. guys doing?" one shouted. "Do they have a work permit?" Fifteen minutes later, the truck moved on, and the jam slowly cleared.

On getaway day, Popolizio told me, "We're going to be putting in our outbound timing progressions a little early this afternoon, maybe at one-thirty to two instead of three-thirty to four, to give more green time to the outbound lights. All to help get people out of the city as smoothly as possible."

Unfortunately, in getting people smoothly out of Manhattan the city's D.O.T. engineers weren't necessarily making their trips faster, and they may ultimately have been slowing down the drivers by flooding the highways outside the city with more cars than they were designed to accommodate. No major new highways have been built around New York since the nineteen-seventies, partly because there's no room left, and partly because many people believe that building highways makes congestion worse, because drivers who had previously used mass transit to avoid the traffic begin using the new roads. Even if no new drivers take to the new roads, scientists have shown that increased road capacity alone can increase congestion, a phenomenon sometimes referred to as "Braess's paradox," after a German mathematician named Dietrich Braess. In the twenty-three American cities that added the most new roads per person during the nineteen-nineties, traffic congestion rose by more than seventy per cent.

But not building highways also causes traffic. The section of I-95 that runs from the New York state line to New Haven, for example, was designed to accommodate seventy thousand vehicles a day; it now carries more than a hundred and fifty thousand in places. Many parts of the nation's forty-seven-thousand-mile interstate-highway system, which was created in the nineteen-fifties, suffer similar overloads. Politically, it's almost impossible to build major new roads. David Schulz, the director of the Infrastructure Technology Institute, at Northwestern University, said recently, "When you talk about building a new road, the number of people who benefit will be large, but their individual benefit will be quite small. The number of people who will be harmed will be small, but their disbenefit will be very large. And it's those people who will get involved in the public hearings and stop the road." NIMBY ("Not in my back yard") has given birth to BANANA ("Build almost nothing anywhere near anyone"), which has spawned NOPE ("Not on planet Earth").

The Federal Highway Administration has spent hundreds of millions of dollars over the past decade to make highways "intelligent," deploying a wide range of detection devices known collectively as I.T.S. (intelligent transportation systems), which are supposed to track, predict, and possibly control traffic. Much of this technology was developed by the United States military and used during the Gulf War. (It is now part of our new homeland security

"I wonder if there is ever a perfect time to tell someone his hands are sticky."

measures.) It includes closed-circuit television cameras, vehicle sensors buried in the roads, overhead proximity radar, optical-image sensors, and the E-Z Pass transponder—the small plastic box on your windshield which communicates with overhead "readers," and which may be the most significant advance in traffic management since the traffic signal. Mark Hallenbeck, the director of the Washington State Transportation Center, at the University of Washington, says that the idea "is to add capacity with information, the way we used to add capacity with concrete. In highway agencies, we used to think of ourselves as being in the construction business. We build a road, go away, and then come back in twenty years and add a lane. Now all these agencies are having to learn how to increase capacity by adding intelligence to the system."

On Friday afternoon, after I had spoken to Popolizio, I called Transcom, a public interagency traffic-management organization based in Jersey City, to find out what was happening on the roads outside the city. Part of Transcom's mission is to coördinate information about I-95 which is supplied by the states that the road runs through. Traffic, after all, doesn't respect city or country boundaries. Today, Transcom's managers told me, they were busy alerting travellers to problems on the highway that had started hours earlier, at Exit 34, near Milford, Connecticut. At 6:30 A.M., a tractor-trailer on I-95 northbound, carrying a load of car batteries, had hit a guardrail, overturned, and caught fire. The state police closed all lanes, in both directions, while they cut apart the truck and made sure no battery acid remained on the highway—a process that took eight hours. By noon, traffic was backed up for thirteen miles. Information about the delays was posted on electronic message signs mounted over the region's highways, and alerts were broadcast over highway-advisory radio. At the moment, Transcom does not provide drivers with alternate routes, but, according to its executive director, Matthew Edelman, "Lots of these drivers know the roads, and if you tell them where the problem is they'll figure out how to get around it." This is assuming, of course, that drivers do what the system tells them to do. Dave Zavattero, the I.T.S. program manager for the Illinois Department of Transportation, says that many drivers deliberately do the opposite. "We have variable signs on the Kennedy and Dan Ryan Expressways," in Chicago, he told me. "The signs tell you whether the local lanes or the express lanes are moving faster. But if I put a message up there that says the express lanes are five minutes faster a certain number of drivers will figure that the other drivers are taking the express lanes, so they're going to take the local lanes."

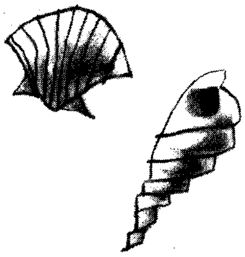
On this getaway day, any drivers heading out of New York early to avoid the afternoon rush hour who had checked the traffic cams and bulletins on the Web just before leaving would have known to take the Hutchinson River Parkway north to the Merritt Parkway, skirting the jam on I-95. But in fact the Hutch wasn't much better. Around noon, a truck driver had attempted an illegal dash along the parkway (which is off limits to commercial traffic) to avoid the problems on I-95 and got stuck under one of the overpasses. This meant that by 1 P.M. all the New England-bound travellers that Popolizio and his colleagues were helping to leave the city were about to find two of the principal northbound routes blocked, and, as we saw from the helicopter, by 2:15 P.M. a third—the northbound New York State Thruway—was a parking lot, too.

Shortly after 4 P.M., the N.Y.P.D. closed the Manhattan-bound side of the Brooklyn Bridge to investigate a suspicious package that had been found on the roadway. When those lanes reopened, at four-thirty, the police shut the Brooklyn-bound lanes for half an hour. The result was "terrorlock"—the latest gridlock neologism to enter New York's traffic vocabulary—on both sides of the bridge. Traffic on the neighboring Manhattan Bridge came to a standstill; the F.D.R. Drive backed up with people waiting to get onto the bridges.

NewsCopter 7 was on the scene, hovering over the Brooklyn Bridge, taking pictures of the police activity below.

"Here comes the bomb squad," Anderson said, zooming in on the truck.

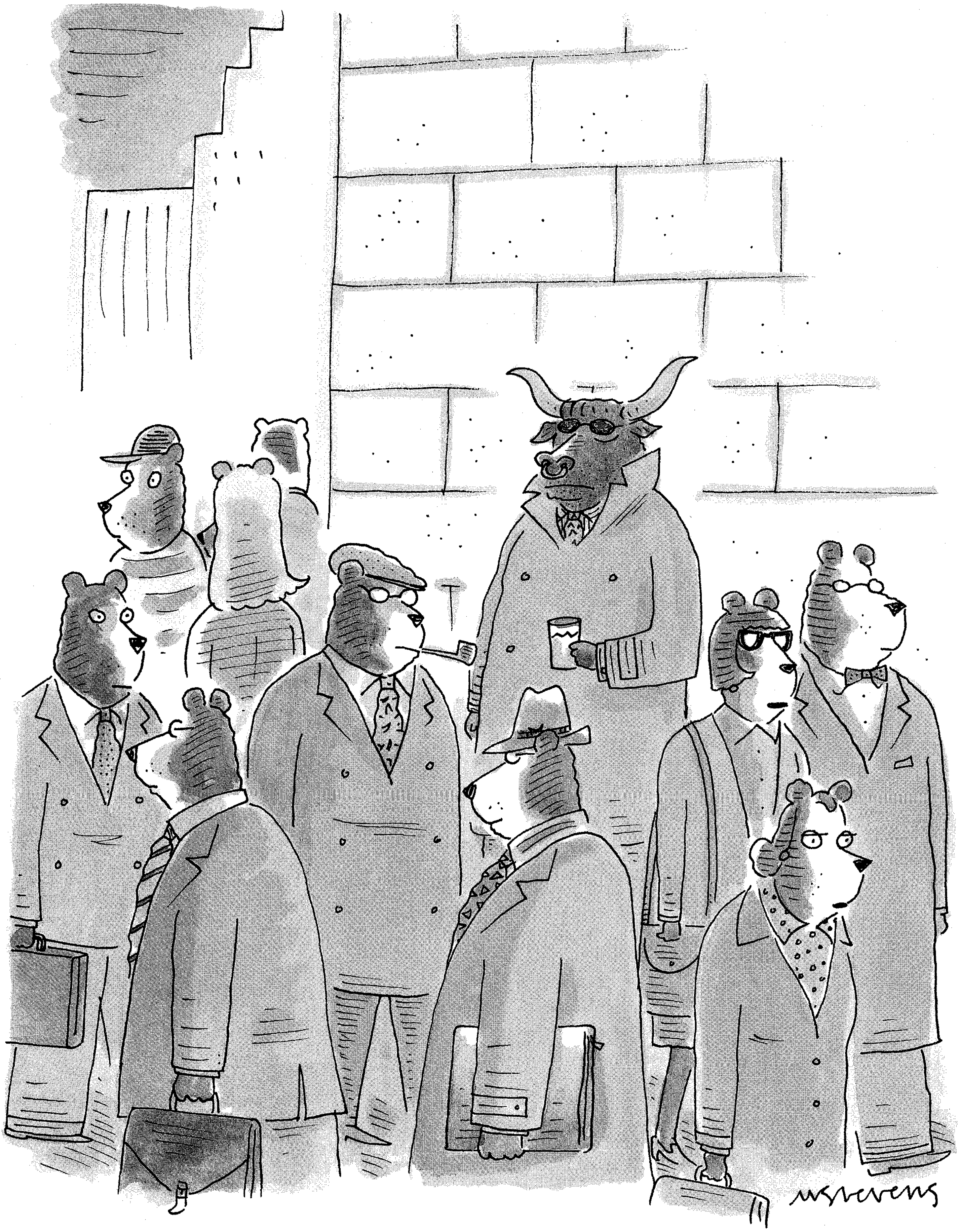
I watched the streets of downtown Brooklyn filling with traffic. These drivers had been trying to avoid congestion by getting off the Gowanus Expressway before its merge with the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, a trouble spot that causes seven and a half million hours of drivers' delays annually, and then taking Hicks Street through Cobble Hill and Brooklyn Heights. In using this time-tested solution to highway traffic—back streets—these drivers were creating a traffic problem for the people who live on those streets, some of whom had hoped to avoid the holiday traffic by staying home.



At 4:45 P.M., while the police were searching the Brooklyn Bridge (they found only a stray knapsack), a car caught fire inside the Lincoln Tunnel, closing the Manhattan-bound lanes and creating congestion on the eastern spur of the New Jersey Turnpike. NewsCopter 7 flew across the river to check out the fire, but there was nothing much to photograph. "Car fires make great pictures—if you can get to them in time," Sohn said. "The problem is that the Fire Department puts out car fires so fast."

Sohn and her pilot had a hunch that the George Washington Bridge was their best bet for the six-o'clock news, so we headed up there shortly after 5 P.M., stopping once along the way to record a few "beauty shots" of the city skyline, which would be used to lead into the weather report. Sohn was careful to keep traffic out of the pictures. "Traffic is not what they're looking for in a beauty shot," she said.

As we came up to the bridge, we saw the jam: a solid line of traffic stretching from the New Jersey Turnpike to the bridge's toll plazas, then east all the way across the Cross-Bronx Expressway and north into Westchester County. The Major Deegan, the Grand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Concourse, the Sheridan, and the Bruckner were also packed with cars and trucks. Only the traffic on the bridge was moving—the part you'd expect to be the most congested—offering travellers a brief respite between jams.

"Look at that," Sohn said admiringly.

She directed Anderson to hover over Ridgefield Park, New Jersey, where I-95 joins I-80 and swings east for its approach to "the George"—and where she could get the best shots. She sent some of these pictures to Channel 7 and waited. It was almost six. Removing her lollipop, Sohn positioned the onboard "lipstick camera," mounted on the instrument console, so that it was pointed at her face, ready to go live at the top of the hour if she was called upon.

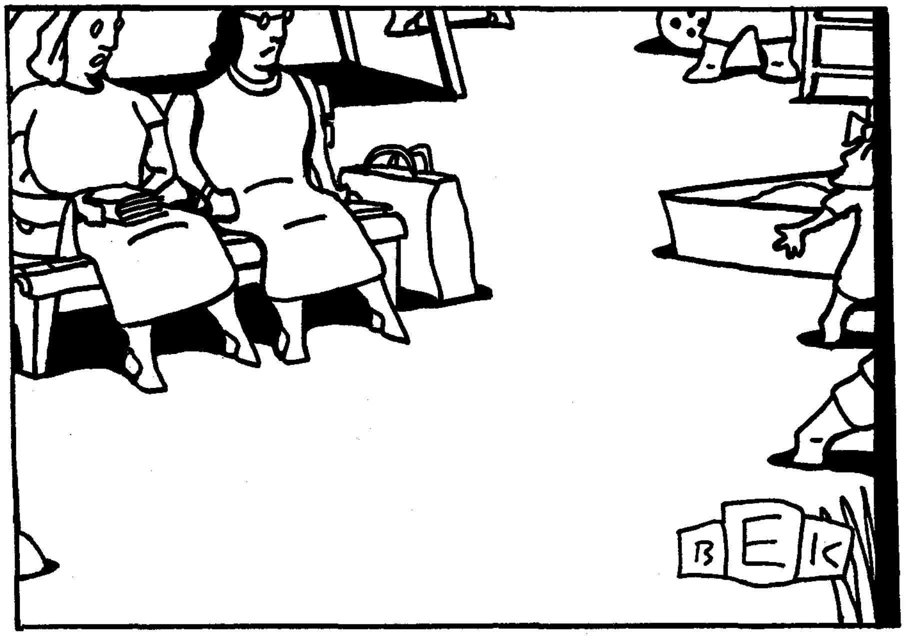
The jam at the George had begun hours earlier, at around 1:30 P.M., as a result of a minor accident on the bridge's lower level—a fender bender involving a truck and a car which briefly blocked one lane. This tiny mishap was enough to turn a highway of free-flowing traffic into suet. It was a classic illustration of what is known among traffic engineers as "the Wile E. Coyote effect." Just as the curve of maximum "throughput"—moving as many cars between two points on a road as efficiently as possible—reaches its peak, it abruptly falls off the cliff and is squashed flat against the baseline of the graph.

Traffic engineering is the science of maximizing throughput. What makes traffic jams hard to understand, at least within traditional traffic-engineering practice, is that they tend to occur around the time that the road is performing according to the engineers' peak specification. One important development in understanding this "nonlinear" phenomenon came in 1992, when Kai Nagel and Michael Schreckenberg, two physicists at the University of Cologne, in Germany, began to apply a computational technique known as "cellular automata" (or C.A.) to traffic. In a C.A. model, highway capacity is represented as a two-dimensional grid. Each cell in the grid has one of two "states": empty or occupied by a particle, which in this case is a car. Unlike traditional mathematical models used by traffic engineers, where it is assumed that all drivers are the same, in a C.A. model the particles can be assigned values intended to represent different types of drivers: fast drivers, slow drivers, tailgaters, and lane changers can all be represented in the model. The result is virtual traffic.

Using a variety of computer techniques, engineers can build virtual roads on computers, add virtual cars to them, and sit back and watch what happens. K.L.D. Associates, of Huntington Station, Long Island, sent me a simulation program for lower Manhattan, and I spent a morning watching virtual traffic flow up and down the West Side Highway. K.L.D. is also using traffic modelling to plan evacuation scenarios for possible events like a terrorist attack on the Indian Point nuclear facility, in Buchanan, New York. "We work with ten different levels of driver aggressiveness," Mayer Horn, K.L.D.'s vice-president, told me. "Also, we take into account that people who drive during the week drive more aggressively than those who drive only on the weekend—Sunday drivers."

Computer modelling has made it possible to study traffic not only as a physical system but as a social system, and several notable papers have appeared that explore the relationship between driver behavior and traffic jams. Two researchers, Donald Redelmeier, of the University of Toronto, and Robert Tibshirani, of Stanford, used computer modelling to demonstrate that changing lanes in traffic doesn't help, although it may seem to the lane changer that he is making progress. In a paper in *Nature*, the authors argued that this is because drivers mistakenly judge their progress relative to other drivers rather than to the over-all time of the trip, and because drivers make decisions to change lanes based on short intervals, during which the other lane may move faster, rather than on longer intervals, in which the slower lane speeds up. The authors concluded that drivers change lanes for emotional reasons; namely, that they prefer overtaking to being overtaken. Their theory was recently contested by Nick Bostrom, a philosophy lecturer at Yale University, who argues in a short paper entitled "Cars in the Next Lane Really Do Go Faster" that certain lanes do move more slowly and the reason is that there are actually more cars in them, and that only by drivers' changing lanes can the highway as a whole reach equilibrium and maximum throughput.

After ten years of traffic analysis using C.A. models, Kai Nagel and his European colleagues have concluded that traffic jams can occur for almost any reason at all. A slight upgrade in the roadway, a light rain, or even a single road-rager getting cut off by a Sunday



"They grow up so slow."

driver can provide the trigger for a traffic jam. Someone brakes, forcing the driver behind to brake harder, and the shock wave is sent backward through the traffic until eventually someone comes to a standstill. The Germans' gloomy position—that traffic jams will occur no matter how ingenious traffic managers are—is not popular with the engineers I have met around New York. "That stuff may work on the Autobahn," John Tipaldo, of the city's D.O.T., told me, "but not here. New York's traffic may be crazy, but it's not that crazy."

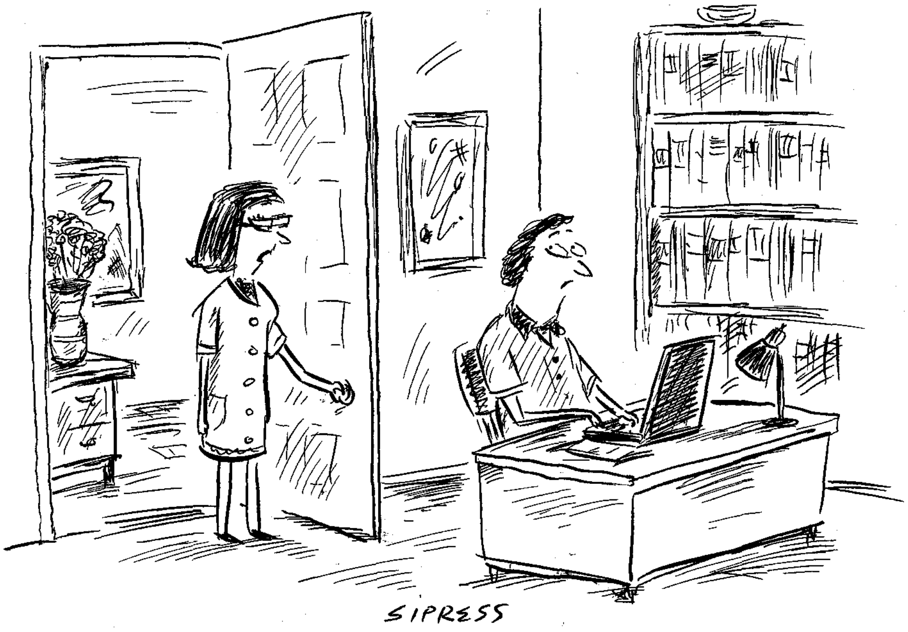
From time to time during the course of my traffic studies, when it seemed that traffic really was fundamentally chaotic, I'd go see Sam Schwartz. Also known as Gridlock Sam, Schwartz is the closest thing New York has to a traffic guru. He is unique in the polarized politics of automobiles in New York: he manages to be both pro-car and anti-car, sometimes simultaneously. His support of rush-hour restrictions and East River bridge tolls, in a 1991 *News* op-ed piece, did not prevent him from conducting a study for the Metropolitan Parking Association which showed that the post-September 11th restrictions were hurting the city's economy. This apparent duplicity incensed the anti-car contingent that had considered Schwartz an important ally. But Gridlock Sam has built his career at the crossroads of conflicting points of view.

In his "traffic forecast," which appears six times a week in the *News*, opposite the weather, Schwartz is the voice of every traffic-savvy driver who knows to avoid the Gowanus and the B.Q.E. by cutting through Brooklyn. His followers observe Sam's traffic calendar, which is an ecumenical mix of the Christian, Jewish, and Muslim holidays during which alternate-side-of-the-street parking is suspended. If Gridlock Sam's column was your only source of news, you'd have a pretty fair idea of what was going on around the city—the visiting dignitaries, celebrity-studded benefits, parades, political demonstrations, out-of-state lotto jackpots, block parties, and sports events in the area. Gridlock Sam has made traffic his world view.

Schwartz was New York City's traffic commissioner for most of the nineteen-eighties, and during his storied career as a public servant he displayed a flair for the dramatic that is not the rule among traffic engineers. He was responsible for the "Don't Even Think of Parking Here" signs in midtown, and his anti-gridlock "Don't Block the Box" initiative created a lasting improvement in traffic flow. He waged war on "sitters," especially the limos waiting for fat cats to finish their power breakfasts in midtown hotels. The drivers didn't care about the thirty-five-dollar tickets they received for sitting (some of them even said thank you, which spooked the traffic agents), so Schwartz got the city to make sitting a moving violation, for which a driver incurs points on his license.

Schwartz ticketed Mayor Koch's car for illegal parking while they were having lunch together, revoked the parking spot of the archbishop of New York, which was next to St. Patrick's Cathedral (it caused backups on Fifth Avenue and East Fiftieth Street), and had a TV-news van towed while the crew was interviewing him. But his finest hour was his assault on illegally parked cars with diplomatic plates. Not only did Schwartz ticket these cars; he began towing them, which caused an uproar in the diplomatic community. A special session of more than a hundred delegates to the U.N. was convened to meet with the traffic commissioner. The Russians cited the Geneva Convention, which they claimed guaranteed the right to free parking. The French said it was possible that the entire U.N. might move to Vienna if the diplomats didn't get their parking privileges back. But Schwartz was unmoved, and kept up his assault until, a week or so later, the United States State Department informed him that American diplomats in Norway and Togo had lost their parking privileges, and that to avert an international crisis Schwartz should consider refocussing his energies. "What I've learned from experience," he told me, "is that in New York people will go a long way to keep their parking privileges."

One fine afternoon this spring, Schwartz took me for a drive around Manhattan. We drove in his car, a Volvo, which he keeps in a lot on Lafayette Street. We headed uptown, looking for some traffic. "I can't understand it," Schwartz said several times, shaking his head, as we sailed up Park Avenue South. "You never see it like this." We cut over to Madison Avenue; it was rush hour—surely we'd find some traffic there. Instead, we surfed along on the D.O.T.'s signal progression, and even



"Is this a good time to have a big fight?"

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"O.K., there's the sun, so that direction is 'up.'"

made the light at Forty-second Street. Schwartz took no pleasure in these minor miracles. Without traffic, Gridlock Sam wasn't quite himself.

Finally, on Forty-seventh Street between Fifth and Sixth—the diamond district—Schwartz perked up. He began pointing out traffic violators. "Sitter. Sitter. Diplomat. Sitter—he's a Supreme Court judge, according to the plate." Up in front of us, traffic was squeezing into one lane to get around a "Mitzvah mobile," which is used by the Lubavitcher community in Brooklyn to transport people to the diamond district, and which had a large picture of their late spiritual leader Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson painted on its side. Just as we were taking our place in the queue—*bang!*—the Volvo shuddered. The driver of the S.U.V. behind us, locked in a battle with the driver of the Town Car beside him over who was going to get around the Mitzvah bus first, had struck Gridlock Sam's rear bumper. But the S.U.V. driver didn't seem to notice. Or perhaps he didn't care. At any rate, the event delighted Gridlock Sam: "He doesn't even know he hit me!"

Since this spring, traffic in the city has grown steadily worse—or better, depending on your point of view. When I spoke to Gridlock Sam the other day, he reported that the level of congestion was about where it had been in the mid-nineties. "It's not where it was at the height of the economic boom," he said. "But we're close." He was trying to sound dire about this, but I could detect a note of joy in his voice.

Most drivers see traffic jams as an impediment to their own progress; few think that their presence in the jam is an impediment to everyone else. But the true cost of a traffic jam is not only the time you are delayed; it's the accumulated time that your vehicle adds to everyone else's delay, because everyone else must travel the additional length of your vehicle to get to the barbecue. As Wolfgang Sachs, a German environmental scientist, points out in his book "For the Love of the Automobile," "Once a certain traffic density is surpassed, every driver contributes involuntarily to the slowing of traffic. The time that the individual driver steals from all the others by slowing them down is greater many times over than the time he or she might have hoped to gain by taking the car."

The economic solution to traffic jams is to price roads the way we price other limited resources. Just as air travellers pay a premium to fly during peak periods, so car travellers should pay a premium to drive during times when everyone else wants to drive, such as the Friday before Labor Day. This form of traffic management, which is called "congestion pricing" (although its promoters like to call it "value pricing," because that sounds better), is a relatively easy system to implement; the technology necessary for it to work already exists, in the form of the E-Z Pass. Politically, the idea is a harder sell. (They're not called freeways for nothing.) But there are signs that congestion pricing is beginning to influence traffic management, and nowhere in North America is this more evident than in New York.

A year ago, the Port Authority began using congestion pricing in the Lincoln and Holland Tunnels, on the George Washington Bridge, and on the three New Jersey–Staten Island bridges; drivers crossing the Hudson, eastbound, at peak hours pay five dollars, while drivers at other times pay four. (Drivers without E-Z Pass always pay six.) The New Jersey Turnpike also uses congestion pricing. A form of congestion pricing is already in effect for parking, thanks to the new European-style Muni-Meters (the blue boxes that print tickets for display on your dashboard, which are replacing parking meters around the city).

Four East River crossings, however, remain free. This may be the single most irrational traffic-management practice in New York City: there is actually an economic incentive for a Long Island driver travelling to New Jersey to go through Manhattan, one of the most congested places on earth, rather than through Brooklyn and Staten Island, because the former trip costs nothing while the latter costs seven dollars—the price of the toll on the southbound Verrazano Narrows Bridge. City planners have long argued for tolls, and Mayors Lindsay, Koch, and Dinkins all wanted them but could not build the coalition of city and state politicians necessary to implement them. Bloomberg floated the idea of East River tolls last spring, in his budget proposal, and he has been meeting privately with politicians and business leaders to gather support for the idea, and many observers think he will endorse the tolls publicly after the gubernatorial election this fall. Bloomberg also has the economic imperative of a budget deficit of five billion dollars. If New Yorkers are faced with the choice between losing city services (closing libraries, cutting back the number of police officers, adding more children to already overcrowded classrooms) and paying tolls on the East River bridges, many might choose the second option.

Instituting tolls on the East River and Harlem River bridges with E-Z Pass would, in effect, create what's known as a "cordon"—an electronic necklace of sensors surrounding the hub below Sixtieth Street. Singapore and Oslo have built cordons, and they are planned for other European cities, including London. If Mayor Ken Livingstone has his way, beginning on February 17, 2003, any nonresident entering central London between 7 A.M. and 6:30 P.M., Monday to Friday, will have to pay a toll of five pounds per vehicle. Once a cordon is in place, it can be used to restrict or regulate entry to a city—or to any neighborhood, for that matter—in many ways. Vehicles could be charged according to how much time they spend inside the city; residents could be charged differently from out-of-towners; those driving a single-occupancy vehicle could be charged more than carpoolers; and if the S.O.V. is an S.U.V. the driver could be charged more than someone in a compact.

Sam Schwartz favors not only East River bridge tolls but also first-class high-speed lanes over the bridges, for which drivers would pay a premium that would guarantee them passage in a certain amount of time or their money back (all of which could be easily accomplished with E-Z Pass). In 1995, four new toll lanes opened alongside the Riverside Freeway, in Southern California, which runs between Anaheim and Riverside County, allowing drivers who are willing to pay the toll (four-seventy-five during peak periods) a considerably speedier trip. Schwartz thinks that something similar should be done both on the East River bridges and on the Long Island Expressway. Critics of high-speed toll lanes say they would discriminate against lower-income drivers, creating "Lexus lanes" for the rich, but Schwartz disagrees. "First of all, the lowest-income workers aren't coming into Manhattan by car—they can't afford to park. Of the middle-class workers who drive, are you telling me that an electrician from Long Island who makes a hundred dollars an hour wouldn't pay ten dollars to save an hour in traffic?"

At 5:59 P.M., the crew of NewsCopter 7 heard from the studio: their report would be leading the six-o'clock news.

"All right!" Sohn said.

"O.K., Shannon, to you in thirty seconds," a voice in the headphones said.

"I'm getting skid in the shot," Sohn said to Anderson, indicating the landing gear, and he angled the chopper downward so that the viewers at home would have an unobstructed view of the full horror of I-95.

Just before the news began, Channel 7 ran a car commercial. It showed a Jeep Grand Cherokee cruising along an empty road somewhere in the dreamscape of automotive fantasy. Then the clarions sounded, announcing the start of "Eyewitness News."

"Shannon, what's it like out there?" one of the anchors asked.

Sohn reported that it was very bad indeed—"an unbelievable bumper-to-bumper jam leading from the George all the way up to the toll plaza at the New Jersey Turnpike—a solid hour-and-a-half delay," she said. She gave a rundown of the other traffic nightmares the city had suffered, and concluded, "This may be the worst holiday traffic I've ever seen."

"Thanks, Shannon," the anchor said when the spot ended. It was comforting to know that New York was getting back to normal.

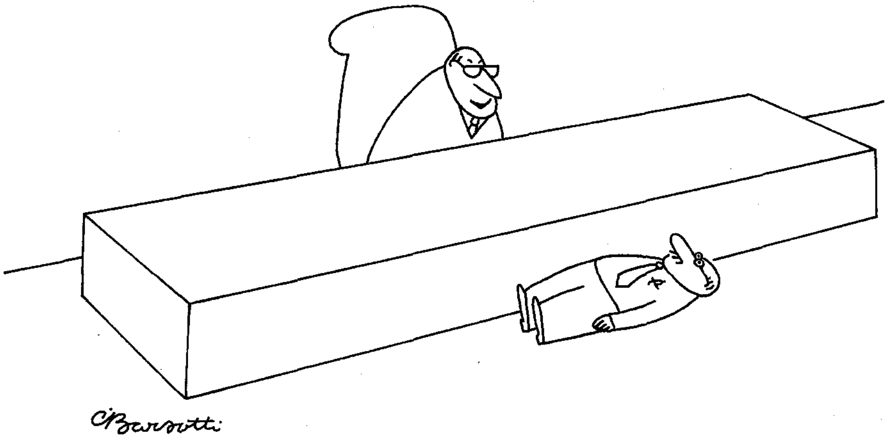
At 6:15 P.M., NewsCopter 7 was whirring back to Linden Airport. The sun was sinking toward Kittatinny Mountain, in northwestern New Jersey, and the hazy summer light was smudging the edges of Manhattan's skyline. It had been a terrible day for traffic, but a good day—"a five-lollipop day"—for Shannon Sohn.

"What's the next worst traffic you've seen?" I asked Sohn as we were once again flying over Newark.

"Yesterday," she said. "Yesterday was horrible."

How was she going to get away this weekend?

"I'm going to ride my horse," she said. ♦



"Nothing personal, Wilson. I just wanted to see if I still had it."

FICTION

SHYLOCK ON THE NEVA

BY GARY SHTEYNGART

I awoke one day to a phone call from the painter Chartkov, a recent graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts, a lean, sallow fellow with a flaxen goatee and the overearnest expression of the Slavic intellectual—yes, we all know the kind of person I'm talking about. Bloodshot eyes? Porcupine hair? Uneven bottom teeth? Great big potato nose? Thirty-ruble sunglasses from a metro kiosk? All of it.

How did I wake up? I felt a sexual vibration in my pocket and realized I had fallen asleep with my pants on, my *mobilnik* still lodged next to that conclusive organ everyone cares so much about. "*Af*," I said to the painter Chartkov. What else can one say under these conditions, this damn modernity we all live in? May it all go to the Devil, especially these tiny Finnish phones that nuzzle in your pocket all night.

"Valentin Pavlovich," the young painter's voice trembled.

"Oh, you bitch," I said. "What time is it?"

"It's already one o'clock," the painter said, then, realizing he was taking too many liberties with me, added, "Perhaps, after all, if it's not too much of a bother, you will still come and sit once more for your portrait as we have previously arranged."

"Perhaps, perhaps," I said. "Well, why don't I wash myself first? Isn't that how the civilized people do it, in Europe? They wash first, then they sit for a portrait?"

"Mmm, yes," said the painter. "I— You see, I honestly don't know. I've never been to Europe. Only to Lithuania, where I have an uncle."

"Lithuania," I said. "All the way to Lithuania? Such a worldly artist you must be, Chartkov." I instructed him to await my arrival patiently and then turned off the phone. Do I sound unkind? A typical New Russian? Well, let me assure the reader: I'm a very nice person, but on this particular day I was feeling a little out of sorts, a veritable crab.

The culprit was crack cocaine. On the previous night, I had the pleasure of meeting three Canadians at the Idiot Café, two boys and one girl. They had been brave (and idiotic) enough to bring a few rocks of the stuff into our drug-addled city and we adjourned quickly to my house to smoke it.

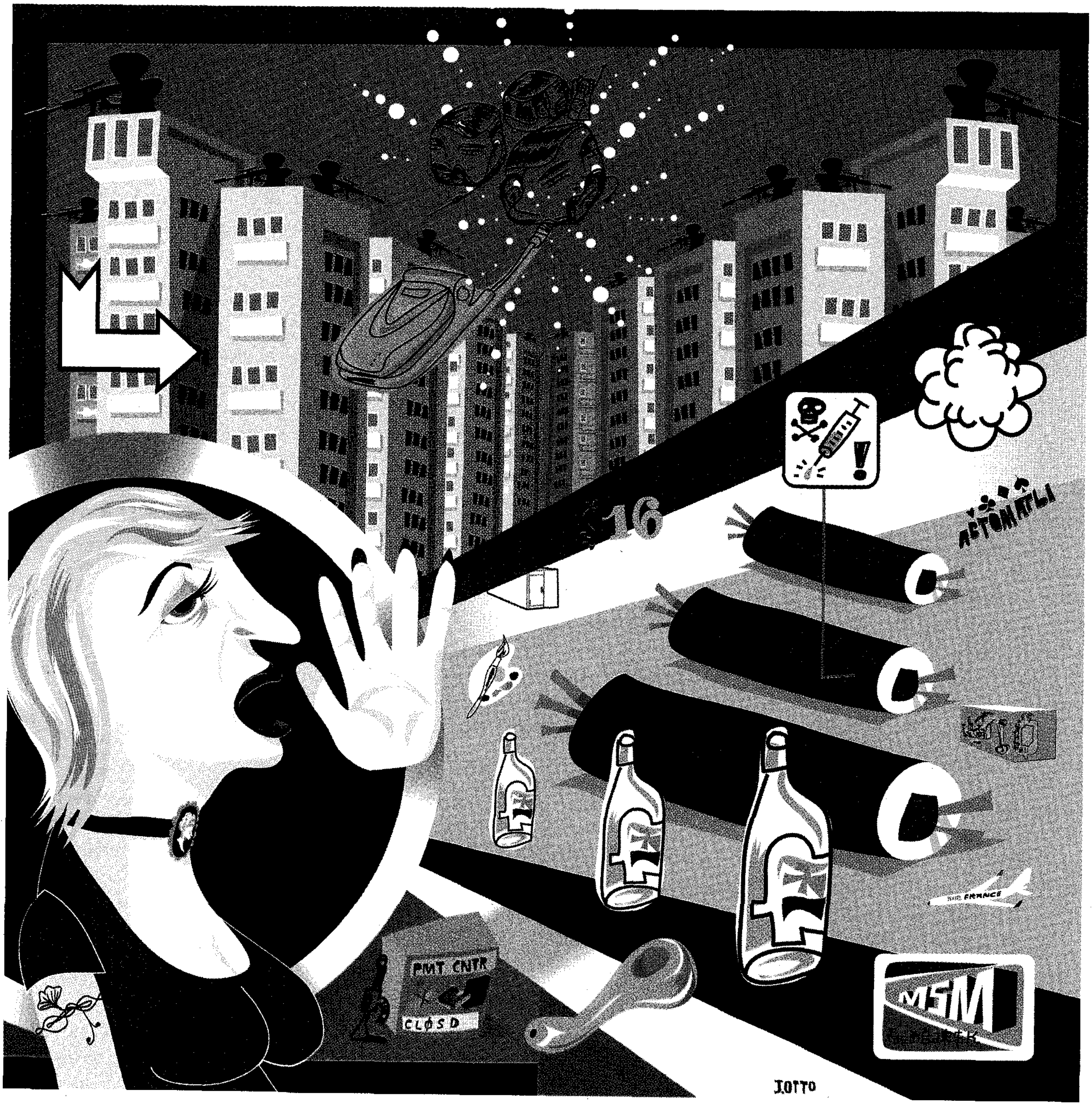
It was my first time! Bravo, Valentin Pavlovich! What was it like? Not so bad, much like going into a dark, warm room, where, at first, some pleasant things happened, a steady tingle to the nether regions, a flood of happy tears and gay sniffling, and then some very unhappy sensations, probably having to do with the miserable past we all share, the youthful beatings by parents and peers, and the constant strain of living in this Russia of ours. Yes, these are the sorts of things one babbles about the morning after he puffs on the crack pipe—"Russia, Russia, where are you flying to?" and all that Gogolian nonsense.

I retired to the parlor, and discovered that the Canadians were still there. They were sprawled out on the divans, lost beneath thick worsted blankets my manservant, Timofey, must have thrown over them. I could make out the shape of the Canadian girl—twenty-one years old, and with legs and thighs as powerful as a horse's—and hear her piercing snore. In the West, even the drug addicts are healthy and strong. I considered falling in love with the girl, just for some extra Canadian warmth in the morning. But what foreign girl would want me? They're very psychologically adept, these girls, nothing like ours, and I can't fool them with my money and good English.

So I went back to my bedroom to see my cheap, fatalistic Murka, still asleep, coughing her way through the midday slumber, her pincerlike legs folded up. Poor girl. I rescued her from some collective farm on a *biznes* trip to the provinces a few years back. She was seventeen, but already covered in pigshit and bruises. On the other hand, you should have seen how quickly she installed herself in my flat in Petersburg and fell into the role of rich, urban girlfriend—asleep most of the day, drugged out at night, weepy and sexless in between. To see Murka with a shopping basket and a charge card at the Stockmann Finnish emporium on Nevsky Prospekt, yelling brutally at some innocent shop clerk, is to understand that elusive American term "empowerment," the kind of thing the foreigners teach you at the Idiot Café. I kissed Murka tenderly, washed myself as well as I could and called for Timofey to dry me off. My manservant, a big Karelian peasant, beat me with a twig to improve my circulation and then strapped me into an Italian lamb's-wool suit jacket, the kind that makes me look ten years older than my age and fat into the bargain. Oh, what a business is fashion!

Timofey brought around the usual convoy—two Mercedes 300 M S.U.V.s and one S-class sedan, so as to form the letters M-S-M, the name of my bank, for, you see, I am something of a money-lender. As we took off for Chartkov's neighborhood, the call came through from Alyosha, my well-bribed source at the Interior Ministry, warning that a sniper was set to pick me off at the English Embankment. We took another route.

Chartkov lived on the far edge of the Kolomna district. I hasten to paint a picture for the reader: the Fontanka River, windswept (even in summer), its crooked nineteenth-century skyline interrupted by a post-apocalyptic wedge of the Sovetskaya Hotel; the hotel surrounded by rows of yellowing, water-logged apartment houses; the apartment houses,



J. OTTO SEIBOLD

in turn, surrounded by corrugated shacks housing a bootleg-CD emporium; the ad-hoc Casino Mississippi ("America Is Far, but Mississippi Is Near"); a burned-out kiosk selling industrial-sized containers of crab salad; and the requisite Syrian-shwarma hut smelling of spilled vodka, spoiled cabbage, and a vague, free-floating inhumanity.

Chartkov shared his communal quarters with a slowly dying soldier just returned from Chechnya, the soldier's invalid mother, his two invalid children, and an invalid dog. The painter's studio was at the very rear, his front door covered with a poster of the American superband Pearl Jam. When I arrived, Chartkov was busy being thrown out of his room by a squat Armenian landlord in a filthy nylon house gown. Remember how I described Chartkov at the outset? The great big potato nose? The flaxen goatee? Well, picture the same nose now dappled in luxuriant Russian tears, the flaxen goatee moist with dread, the red-rimmed eyes working double time to produce these ample waterworks. "Philistine!" Chartkov was screaming at the landlord. "How can you throw a painter out on the street! It is we artists who have introduced Russia to the world! We who wield the brush and the pen! We gave the world Chekhov and Bulgakov and Turgenev!"

"Those were all writers!" the dying soldier screamed, peeking out of his little hole, his invalid children clutching his leg braces as he made long stabbing motions with his crutch. "What painters has Russia given the world?" he shouted. "Throw the scoundrel out, I say!"

"Yes, indeed," the landlord said. "If you walk through the Hermitage, it's all Rembrandts and Titians. Nary an Ivan in sight. Now, if you were a writer . . ."

The painter almost choked on his considerable tears. "No painters?" he cried. "What about Andrei Rublyov? What about the famous Ilya Repin?" he cried. "What about 'Barge Haulers on the Volga'?"

"Is that the one where the little doggie is in the boat and he's standing up on his hind legs?" the landlord asked, twirling his mustache thoughtfully.

Being a patriot and wanting to spare Chartkov any further embarrassment, I decided to intervene. I proceeded to ask the Armenian the amount he was owed, and was duly informed that it was eight months' rent, or U.S. $240. I called my Timofey, who ran up with three U.S. hundred-dollar bills, and then I told the landlord that no change was needed, at which point everyone in the flat gasped, crossed themselves three times, and retreated to their miserable quarters.

I was left alone with the young painter. Chartkov turned away from me, buried his face in his hands, brushed aside his tears, and sighed in a heartbreaking fashion—in other words, did everything possible to avoid thanking me for my generosity. He shuffled into his room, where an old flower-print divan from Hungary, the kind intellectual families favored during the Soviet era, proved to be the only furniture in his possession. A series of incomplete portraits of what seemed to be whores from the National Hunt strip club were scattered about the room, each girl's smile vicious and true to life.

"Here's what I've drawn thus far," he said. He showed me a full-sized sketch, my dour, opaque face staring back at me with all the bravado of a General Suvorov, my dark hair bleached to a Slavic yellow, in the background an M-S-M Bank sign in old-fashioned Cyrillic characters—I looked ready to fight the Turks at Chesme, instead of my usual daily battle with the hash pipe and the tricky zipper on my khakis. Such nonsense!

He motioned me to the divan and proceeded to apply charcoal to paper. "So you're a fan of old Ilya Repin," I said. "Is that what they teach you at the Academy these days? A little reactionary, no?"

"I'm a m-m-monarchist," Chartkov muttered, scowling for no reason.

"Now, there's a popular position for a young man these days," I said. Oh, our poor dispossessed intelligentsia. Why do we even bother to teach them literature and the plastic arts? "And who's your favorite tsar, then, young man?"

"Alexander the First. No, wait, the Second."

"The great reformer. And what kind of art are you interested in, Mr. Painter? These days, I'm afraid, it's all showmanship, like that unfortunate Muscovite who goes around the world pretending he's a dog."

"No, I don't like him at all," Chartkov confessed. "I'm a realist. I paint what I see. Social justice for the common man, that's what I like." And he proceeded to mumble some hodgepodge of Western art theory and comfy Russian chauvinism. "Of course, it is the Jews who have brought Russia to her knees," he whispered, interrupting his work to light a nearby candle in honor of a dead Romanov.

"Could we make this a little more derivative?"

"And do you have a lady friend?" I asked.

He betrayed his twenty-four years by blushing crimson and throwing his gaze in the four major directions, finally settling his eyes on the sketch of two whores, both provincially pretty, yet one unmistakably older than the other; one, in fact, quite old, a telltale trail of life's third set of wrinkles forming a Tigris and Euphrates on her forehead.

"A mother-daughter act," Chartkov explained. "They're from Kursk Province. A sad story." Sad, but rather typical. I will omit the particulars, except to add that both mother and daughter were graduates of some local polytechnic institute. "Very cultured people," Chartkov said. "Elizaveta Ivanovna plays the accordion and her daughter, Lyudmila Petrovna, can quote the major philosophers."

His use of their patronymics was strangely touching—I knew immediately what he wanted to do; after all, it is the only path our young Raskolnikovs can follow. "I will save them!" he said.

"Presumably it is the daughter you fancy," I said.

"Both are like family to me," said Chartkov. "When you meet them you see how they cannot live without each other. They are like Naomi and Ruth."

I chose to let this comparison stand. "My dear Chartkov," I said. "I would certainly like to make their acquaintance. You see, perhaps there is something I can do to better their position."

Chartkov examined me through his dopey thirty-ruble glasses. "I hope you do not mean to hire them," he said.

"Good heavens, no," I assured him. And then I proposed we cut short our session and have dinner with his whorish friends.

On the way to the National Hunt club, Alyosha, my well-greased source at the Interior Ministry, called to warn me of a deadly Godzilla roll set to poison me at the Kimono Japanese restaurant on Bolshaya Morskaya. I changed our dinner plans in favor of the infamous Noble's Nest, by the Mariinsky Theatre, while helping Chartkov empty a small bottle of cognac in the back seat of the Mercedes, a car to which he warmed immediately. "I compare it to the troika of yore," the monarchist said without any irony, wiping his little mouth with my favorite handkerchief.

The National Hunt was all but empty at this time of day, with only four drunk officers from the Dutch Consulate passed out at a back table by the empty roulette table. Despite the lack of an audience, Elizaveta Ivanovna and her daughter, Lyudmila Petrovna, were up on the makeshift stage grinding against two poles to the sound of Pearl Jam. They looked remarkably like the sketches Chartkov had drawn. Immediately, I was reassured about the whole enterprise, about the innate talent I believed Chartkov possessed, and about my own hopes for immortality.

Mother and daughter resembled two sisters, one perhaps ten years older than the other with naked breasts pointing downward, a single crease separating them from the little tummy below. The mother was imparting to Lyudmila her theory that the pole was like a wild animal which one had to grasp with one's thighs lest it escape. The daughter, like all daughters, was shrugging her off, saying, "Mamochka, I know what I'm doing. I watch special movies when you're asleep."

"You're a dunderhead," the mother said, thrusting to the sound of the ravenous American band. "Why did I ever give birth to you?"

"Ladies!" Chartkov cried out to them. "My dear ones! Good evening to you!"

"Hi, there, little guy," mother and daughter sang in unison.

"Ladies," said Chartkov. "I would like to introduce you to Valentin Pavlovich. A very good man who only today has given three hundred dollars to my landlord."

The ladies appraised my expensive shoes and stopped writhing. They hopped down from their poles and pressed themselves against me. Quickly, the air was filled with the smell of nail polish and light exertion. "Good evening," I said, brushing my dark mane, for I tend to get a little shy around prostitutes.

"Please come home with us!" cried the daughter, massaging the posterior crease of my pants with a curious finger. "Fifty dollars per hour for both. You can do what you like, front and back, but, please, no bruises."

"Better yet, we'll go home with *you!*" the mother said. "I imagine you have a beautiful home on the embankment of the River Moika. Or one of those gorgeous Stalin buildings on Moskovsky Prospekt."

"Valentin Pavlovich runs a bank," Chartkov said, shyly but with a certain amount of pride. "He has offered to take us to a restaurant called the Noble's Nest."

"It's in the tea house of the Yusupov mansion," I said, with a pedantic air, knowing that the mansion where the loony charlatan Rasputin was poisoned would not make much of an impression on the ladies. Chartkov managed a slight, historic smile and tried to nuzzle the daughter, who favored him with a chaste kiss on the forehead.

It is no secret that St. Petersburg is a backwater, lost in the shadow of our craven capital Moscow, which itself is but a Third World megalopolis teetering on the edge of extinction. And yet the Noble's Nest is one of the most divine restaurants I have ever seen—dripping with more gold plating than the dome of St. Isaac's, yes; covered with floor-to-ceiling paintings of dead nobles, to be sure. And yet, somehow, against the odds, the place carries off the excesses of the past with the dignified lustre of the Winter Palace.

I knew that a fellow like Chartkov would rejoice. For people like him, educated members of a peasant nation catapulted into the most awkward sort of modernity, this restaurant is one of the two Russias they can understand—it's either the marble and malachite of the Hermitage or a crumbling communal flat on the far edge of Kolomna.

Chartkov began weeping as soon as he saw the menu, and the whores started sniffling, too. They couldn't even name the dishes, such was their excitement and money lust, and had to refer to them by their prices—"Let's split the sixteen-dollar appetizer, and then I'll have the twenty-eight dollars and you can split the thirty-two. Is that all right, Valentin Pavlovich?"

"For God's sake, have what you wish!" I said. "Four dishes, ten dishes, what is money when you're among friends?" And to set the mood for the evening I ordered a bottle of Rothschild for U.S. $1,150.

"So, let's talk some more about your art," I said to Chartkov.

"You see," said Chartkov to his women friends. "We're talking about art now. Isn't it nice, ladies, to sit in a pretty space and talk like gentlemen about the greater subjects?" A whole range of emotions, from an innate distrust of kindness to some latent homosexuality, was playing itself out on Chartkov's red face. He pressed his palm down on my hand.

"Chartkov is doing those nice paintings for us," the mama said to me, "and we're going to use them for our Web page. We're going to have a Web page for our services, don't you know?"

"Oh, look, mama, I believe the two 'sixteen dollars' are here!" Elizaveta Ivanovna cried, as two appetizers of pelmeni dumplings stuffed with deer and crab arrived, both dishes covered by immense silver domes.

"We're talking about art like gentlemen," Chartkov said once more, shaking his head in disbelief.

The evening progressed as expected. We drove to my apartment, taking in the sight of the city on a warm summer night—the sky lit up a false cerulean blue, the thick walls of the Peter and Paul Fortress bathed in gold floodlights, the Winter Palace moored on its embankment like a ship undulating in the twilight, the darkened hulk of St. Isaac's dome officiating over the proceedings. Here was our Petersburg—a magical set piece of ruined mansions and lunar roads traversed by Swedish tourists in low-slung, futuristic buses—and we all had to sigh in appreciation for what was lost and what remained.

Along the way, we took turns hitting the driver with birch twigs, ostensibly to improve his circulation, but in reality because it is impossible to end an evening in Russia without assaulting someone. "Now I feel as if we're in an old-fashioned hansom cab," said Chartkov, "and we're hitting the driver for going too slow. Faster, driver! Faster!"

"Please, sir," pleaded my driver, a nice Chechen fellow named Mamudov, "it is already difficult to drive on these roads, even without being whipped."

"No one has ever called me 'sir' before." Chartkov spoke in wonderment. "Opa, you scoundrel!" he screamed, flailing the driver once more.

I got the call from Alyosha, my well-placed source at the Interior Ministry, and instructed Mamudov to avoid the Troitsky Bridge, where a prospective assassin awaited my motorcade by the third of the cast-iron lamps. Why do so many people want to kill me? I'm a good man and, it should be clear by now, a patriot.

Back home it was the usual seraglio—my Murka in a half-open housecoat was dancing with herself in front of the wall-length dining-room mirror; the Canadians had fed crack cocaine to my cook, Evgeniya, and the poor woman was now running around the house screaming about some dead peasant Anton, crying black tears over her wasted fifty years. The North American culprits themselves were sprawled around the parlor listening to my collection of progressive-house records, recently airlifted out of Berlin's Prenzlauer Berg district.

As soon as they caught sight of the mother and daughter, the two Canadian boys and the one Canadian girl understood the unique sexual situation before them. Chartkov began to protest and cry against this "inhumanity," reminding the Canadians that the mother played the accordion and the daughter could quote Voltaire at will, but I quickly took him into my study and closed the door. "Let's talk about art," I said.

"What will become of my girls?" the painter asked. "My poor Elizaveta Ivanovna and Lyudmila Petrovna," Chartkov said, eying the multitude of English and German volumes that graced my bookshelves, abstruse titles such as "Cayman Island Banking Regulations," annotated, in three volumes, and the ever-popular "A Hundred and One Tax Holidays."

"Enough of this whimpering," I said. "Chartkov, do you know why I hired you to execute my painting?"

"Because you slept with my sister Grusha," Chartkov surmised correctly, "and she recommended me to you."

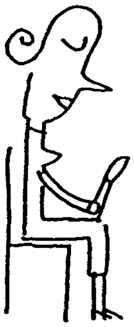
"Yes, initially so. But over the weeks I've come to appreciate you as, mmm, a Christ-like figure. And I use the term loosely, because our language has become as impoverished as our country and it's often hard to find the right term, even if you're willing to pay hard currency for it. See now, you alone can paint a picture of me, Chartkov, that will guarantee my immortality. The problem is, it has to be real. Not this General Suvorov nonsense. I mean, what next? Will you portray me in a tricorne hat, riding a white mare to victory? Let's be realistic. I'm a young moneylender, aging swiftly and, like all Russian *biznesmeny*, not too long for this world. Also, in case you haven't noticed, I have dark hair and a broken nose."

"But I want to make you better than you are," Chartkov said. "I want to restore Christian dignity to your battered soul and the only way to do so is . . . the only way—" I could tell his attention was occupied by the piercing Russian "*Okh, okh, okh!*" coming from the parlor, accompanied by some heartless Canadian grunting.

"That's precisely what you *don't* want to do," I said. "I'm a sinner, Chartkov, and I am not too proud to admit it. I am a sinner and as a sinner you shall paint me! Look deep into my hollowed-out eyes, try on my disposable Italian suit, smoke from my musty crack pipe, befoul my summer *kottedzh* on the Gulf of Finland, stuff yourself with my deer-and-crab pelmeni, whip my manservant, Timofey, until he begs for his life, wake up next to my ruined provincial girlfriend. And then, Chartkov, paint exactly what you see."

Chartkov wiped some more of his infinite tears and helped himself to a bottle of sake that I now pressed into his hand. "Will this get me drunk?" he asked shyly, examining the strange Asiatic lettering.

"Yes, but you mustn't stop drinking it even for a second. Here, it goes with this marinated-squid snack. And in return for your work, of course, I will pay you, Chartkov, pay you enough for you and your Ruth and Naomi to live a comfortable life forever. Perhaps you can even 'save them,' if that's indeed still possible."



"Eight thousand dollars!" Chartkov cried out, grasping at his fragile heart. "That's what I want!"

"Well, I would think considerably more." I was, in fact, expecting to spend at least U.S. $250,000.

"Nine thousand, then!" Chartkov cried. "And I shall paint you just as you like! With horns and a yarmulke if you so desire!"

What could I say? If only I had been a Jew there would have been no need for Chartkov's services. Our Jews are steeped in familial memory and even when they die, for instance when their Lexus S.U.V. gets blown off a bridge by a well-armed rival, they remain locked in the dreary memories of their progeny, circling over the Neva River for eternity, dreaming of their herring and onions. I, on the other hand, had no progeny, no memory, and really very little chance of surviving this country of ours for more than a few more months.

Why deceive myself like the rest of my New Russian compatriots? My wealth notwithstanding, Chartkov's was the only eternity I could afford.

"Well put, Chartkov," I said. "So we are in agreement. And now let us not keep our company waiting. I shall send Timofey out to fetch an accordion. That way the beautiful Elizaveta Ivanovna can entertain us with her other talents."

"God bless you, Valentin Pavlovich!" cried Chartkov, pressing my hand to his cheek.

The next afternoon I woke up with the usual tinnitus in my left ear, a series of duck flares going off in my peripheral vision. The crack-cocaine pipe—the "glass dick," as the Canadians had called it—stared at me accusingly through its single eye. My pillow was covered with alcoholic slobber and what looked like little crack mites dancing their urban-American dance. Meanwhile, coiled up next to me, my Murka was making tragic whistling sounds in her sleep, shielding herself from phantom childhood punches with one upraised skinny arm.

It was a fine moment to be a St. Petersburg gentleman. I called Timofey on the *mobilnik* and he came ambling in from the next room, already dressed in his morning frock. "Did you deliver the painter Chartkov to his digs?" I asked of him.

"Yes, *batyushka*," said Timofey. "And a great one he was, that painter. Soused, like a real *alkash*, and easy with his fists, like my dear dead Papa. I had to carry him up to his flat, and once I laid him out on the divan he started hitting me with his belt. Then we had to get on our knees and pray for a good half hour. He kept shouting 'Christ has risen!' and I had to reply 'Verily, he has risen!' Such people I do not understand, sir."

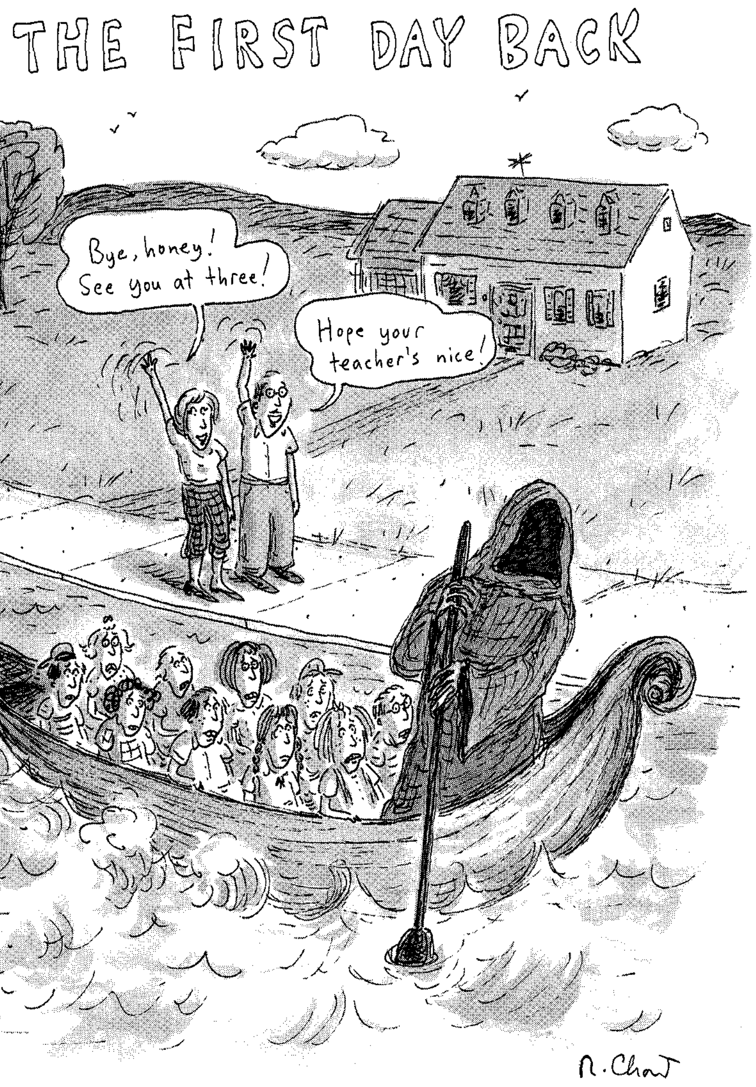
"The ways of artists are beyond us, Timofey," I said. "And did you give him nine thousand dollars in ninety consecutive bills of a hundred dollars each?"

"That I did, *batyushka*," said Timofey. "The painter then took off all his clothes and touched himself in many places with the American currency, while whispering *batyushka's* name most reverently. I was so scared, sir, that I spent half the night in the alehouse."

"You're a good manservant, Timofey," I said. "Now go tend to our Canadian friends while I spend the day frolicking about."

I meant what I said about frolicking. Being a modern moneylender is not a difficult occupation. Armed with computers and bookkeepers and hand grenades, I find the work pretty much takes care of itself. My most pressing duty is showing up at the *biznesmenski* buffet at the T Club every Thursday and glowering across the swank airport-lounge décor at my nearest competitors, the ones that keep trying to blow me off the Troitsky Bridge.

On this warm summer day, the Neva River playful and zippy, a panorama of gray swells and treacherous seagulls, I walked over the bridges to the Peter and Paul Fortress. But unless one gets very excited about third-rate Baroque fortifications, there's really nothing to see, so instead I followed a group of young schoolchildren. In their own way, the children were sublime: destitute in their lousy Polish denim and Chinese high-tops, scarred with acne and low self-esteem, members of the world's first de-industrialized nation but still imbued with our old cultural deference, a Petersburg child's mythical respect for Dutch pediments and Doric porticoes. I watched them fall silent as the tour guide intoned about an occupant of the fortress's ramshackle prison, a revolutionary who once wiped away his tears with Dostoyevsky's handkerchief, or some other such luminary.


THE FIRST DAY BACK
Bye, honey! See you at three!
Hope your teacher's nice!
R. Chast

Can it really be true, as the sociological surveys tell us, that only five years hence these tender shoots will forsake their cultural patrimony to become the next generation of bandits and street-walkers? To test this theory, I looked into the face of the prettiest girl, a dark little Tatar-cheeked beauty with a pink, runny nose and flashed her my standard Will-you-sell-your-body-for-Deutsche-marks? smile. She looked down at the monstrous Third World clodhoppers on her feet. Not yet, her black eyes told me.

Saddened by our children's plight, I doubled back over the Palace Bridge and pushed through the long line of sweaty provincial tourists at the Hermitage, shouting all the while about some obscure Moneylender's Privilege (*droit du dollar*?). I wangled a self-invented Patriot's Discount out of the babushkas at the box office by pretending I was a veteran of the latest Chechen campaign, then ran straight up to the fourth floor, where they keep all the early-twentieth-century French paintings.

I stood before Picasso's portrait of the "Absinthe Drinker" and marvelled at the drunk Parisian woman staring back at me. How many Soviet years have we wasted here on the fourth floor of the Hermitage, looking at these portraits of Frenchmen reading *Le Journal*, pretending that somehow we were still in Europe. In our musty felt boots we stood, staring at Pissarro's impressions of the “Boulevard Montmartre on a Sunny Afternoon” and then, out the window, at our own dirt-caked General Staff building, its pale semi-circular sweep forming the amphitheatre of Palace Square. If we squinted our eyes, or, better yet, took another nip out of our hip flasks, we could well imagine that the General Staff’s delicate arch was somehow a portal onto the Place de la Concorde itself, its statue of six Romanesque horses harnessed to Glory’s chariot really an Air France jetliner ready to sail into the sky.

And, let me ask you, For what all that suffering? For what all those dreams of freedom and release? Ten years later, here we were, a hundred and fifty million Eastern *Untermenschen* collectively trying to fix a rusted Volga sedan by the side of the road.

You know, it was best not to think about it.

So I returned my gaze to Picasso’s absinthe drinker and this time discovered a previously elusive truth. The drunk Parisian had not been staring at me all those years, as I had romantically, egotistically supposed, but solely at the blue bottle of absinthe, her face radiating as much slyness as despair, a careful contemplation of the heavy poison before her. I do not know a great deal about Western art theory, but it seemed possible to me that this woman, this absinthe drinker, had what the American louts at the Idiot Café called “agency.”

Cheered on by my deductions, I sneaked a mouthful of crack cocaine in the men’s room, then sailed out of the Hermitage, through the arch of the General Staff building, and out into the hubbub of Nevsky Prospekt. I wanted very much to buy a warm Pepsi for eight rubles, just like the common people drink, and a piece of meat on a skewer. But, as I approached a food stand manned by a fierce babushka wearing what appeared to be a used sock on her head, my *mobilnik* vibrated with a text message from my friend Alyosha at the Interior Ministry: “Beware the meat skewers of Nevsky.”

The next few weeks were manna. I drank, I smoked, I wrestled with warm-bodied Canadians. I came down with an awful itch in that conclusive place we all talk about, but what can you do? And then I got a call from the painter Chartkov. “Patron!” he cried. “Your likeness is almost ready!”

I had not expected such haste. “But we haven’t even had another sitting,” I said.

“Your physiognomy is imprinted on my brain,” Chartkov said. “How can a moment pass when I do not think of my savior? Please, let me stand you for a drink at Club 69, and then we’ll examine what I call ‘Portrait of the Raven-Haired Moneylender; or, Shylock on the Neva.’ I know you’ll be pleased with me, sir.”

I agreed to an immediate viewing, and summoned Timofey to fetch the cars. Could it be? My mortality giving way to an oily doppelgänger’s everlasting life?

Anyone who can afford the three-dollar cover charge—in other words, the richest one per cent of our city—shows up at Club 69 at some point during the weekend. This is without doubt the most normal place in Russia, no low-level thugs in leather parkas, no skinheads in swastika T-shirts and jackboots, just friendly gay guys and the rich housewives who love them. It brings to mind that popular phrase bandied about at the Idiot Café: “civil society.”

Chartkov showed up, wearing a colorful sweatshirt several sizes too big and imprinted with the logo of the Halifax Nautical Yacht Club. He’d grown plumper in the last few weeks and shaved off his flaxen goatee to reveal a little hard-boiled egg of a chin. “Looking good, Mr. Painter,” I said.

“Feeling good,” he said. “Hi, Zhora.” He waved to a slinky boy behind the bar filling a bucket with grenadine. “How’s life, cucumber?”

“Zhora’s going to Thailand with a rich Swede,” Chartkov said to me. “Let’s go upstairs,” he added, “and I’ll buy you a hundred and fifty grams of vodka. Oh, how we’ll celebrate!”

We sat beneath a statue of Adonis and watched a submarine captain trying to sell his young crew to a German tour group. The seventeen-year-old boys, sporting heroic cosmonaut faces and hairless scrotums, were awkwardly trying to cover their nakedness, while their drunken captain barked at them to let go of their precious goods and “shake them around like a wet dog.” I suppose civil society has its limits, too.

“Look what I bought today at Stockmann,” Chartkov shouted. “It’s a Finnish hair dryer. It has three settings. And look at the color! *Orange!* I’m going to do a lot of work with orange now. And also lime. These are the colors of the future. Is there an electrical outlet here? This machine not only blow-dries your hair; it sculpts it.”

“What about your lady friends?” I said. “Lyudmila the philosopher and her mother with the accordion. Weren’t you going to save them?”

“You know,” Chartkov said, handing me a vodka from a passing tray, “you can’t really save somebody until they want to save themselves. In the past few weeks I’ve been peeking around the English bookstore on the Fontanka. There’s this one volume on how to deal with people, ‘Hand Me My Cheese!,’ or something of the sort, that has made a great impression on me. The problem with the modern Russian is that he is not . . . Ah, what’s that word? He is not ‘proactive’ enough.”

“Also, he is frequently drunk,” I added, raising my glass. “That’s another problem. Well, here’s to us modern Russians. May God save us all!”

“God won’t save us until we save ourselves,” cautioned the former monarchist. “We’ve got a lot of work to do in this country. We’ve got to start by looking seriously at our ‘core competencies’—”

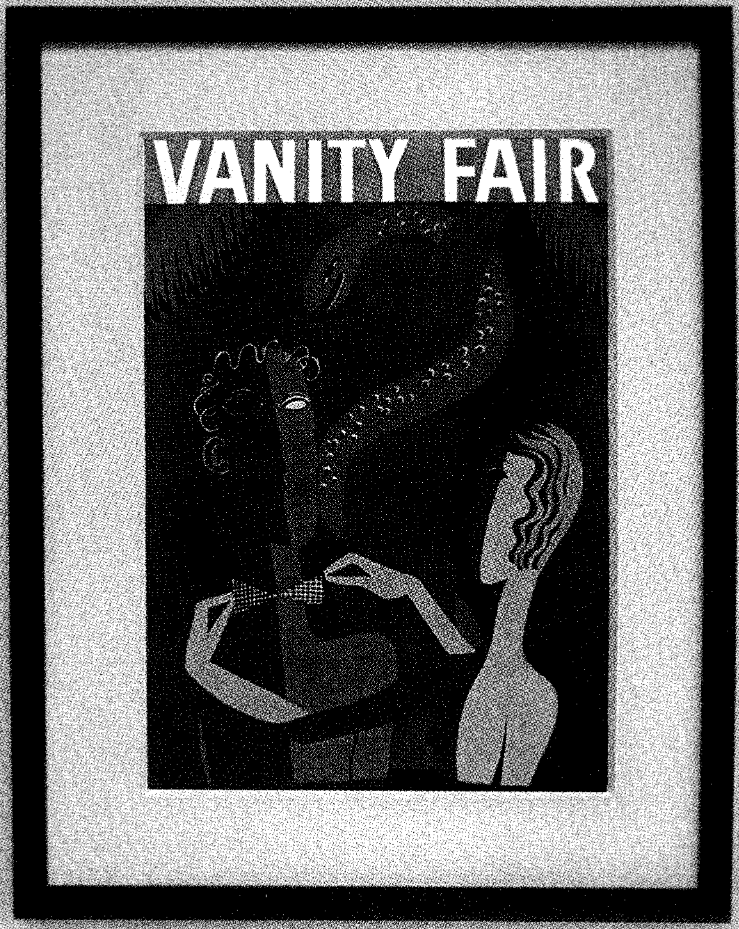
I grabbed Chartkov by the shoulders. “Enough,” I said. “Let’s go to your house.”

Chartkov blanched. “Please, sir,” he said. “I am not a pederast. I merely come to Club 69 for the atmosphere.”

“The painting!” I said. “I must see it at once.”

“Very well,” Chartkov said. “But I paid three dollars a head for the entrance fee, so together it is six—”

“Look here, painter,” I said. “If your rendering is as good as I think it is, I’ll



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give you another nine thousand U.S. dollars on the spot!"

"We must hurry then!" Chartkov cried.

The hallway of Chartkov's communal flat was littered with paint cans, and spent bottles of Crimean port wine. "I bought the whole floor of the building for seven thousand U.S. dollars from that awful Armenian," Chartkov explained, "and the first thing I did was throw the dying soldier and his whole invalid family out on the street. That'll teach them to blacken the name of the Russian painter, may the Devil take them all! When this place is finished, I want to create a multimedia studio. I met this French guy at Club 69, and together we're going to offer painting seminars and a hatha-yoga clinic—"

"Just please hurry!" I cried as we raced through the long communal hallway.

The painter opened the door to his old room.

The first thing I saw was my own jutting lower lip, the one that had given me the nickname Flounder in Pioneer camp; then my eagle nose bent at several junctures from years of schoolyard beatings and domestic scrapes; then my hazy dark eyes, two dim ovals set way back into my skull; then my arms thick and corded, bulging with implied violence, one raised to strike my manservant, another hovering over my lap to protect myself from life's intimate dangers.

My skin was yellow and black in places, my forehead crossed by a monumental green vein. I was caught off center, staring joylessly into an empty corner of the canvas, where the painter had added his own initials.

He had me, Chartkov. He had done well, the poor idiot. There were some excesses, to be sure: I was sporting a pair of Hasidic side curls, while a copy of the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" floated incongruously in the background, a ten-ruble note sticking out in the form of a bookmark. There was no point in telling Chartkov that I was, in fact, not a Judaist; rather, a mixture of Greek and some kind of Siberian mega-Mongol. If he was inspired to paint me in this manner, so be it.

"Here's what you must do, Chartkov," I said.

"What is it?" said the painter. "Should I put on some Pearl Jam? Fetch my patron some tea?"

"Just add a little detail," I said. "Paint a *mobilnik* pressed to my ear."

"Of course," the painter said. "It will be done first thing in the morning! Oh, but now my mind is filled with questions of an embarrassing nature—"

"Timofey will bring you another nine thousand U.S. dollars," I said.

Chartkov threw his arms around me and wept convulsively. His body felt thin and reedy compared with my own. I smelled American herbal shampoo on him, along with the stench of stale Parliaments. "If you wish," he whispered in my ear, "you may also take me from the back."

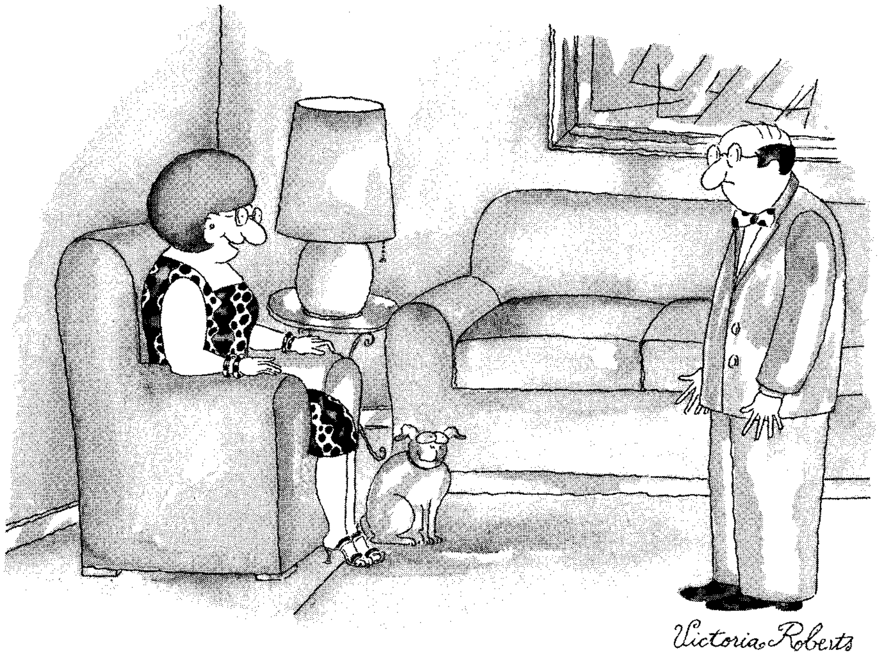
I woke up the next morning to the familiar cellular vibrations in my pocket. Alyosha, at the Interior Ministry, was warning me of a prospective assassination on Leninsky Prospekt. The day had come. I kissed sleeping Murka goodbye, leaving her the number of a colleague who would treat her no worse than I had. I climbed past the Canadians in the parlor and ordered my driver to set off for the southern suburbs.

I had spent my entire adolescence on Leninsky Prospekt. A wide Soviet boulevard filled with nineteen-seventies apartment blocks that might as well have landed from the Andromeda galaxy—long, cumbersome rows of flats, a grayish, intergalactic color, flanked by ten-story towers on which the words "Glory to socialist labor!" and "Life wins out over death!" used to lord over us in fantastic block letters.

As soon I got out of the car, my phone rang once more. A strangled sound emerged from the earpiece. On the far edge of the Kolomna district, in the studio of the painter Chartkov, my immortal double was calling out to me. He was singing a childhood song in a boy's sweet voice, breathless with Leningrad asthma:

Let it always be sunny,
Let there always be Mommy,
Let there always be blue skies,
Let there always be me.

I breathed in the real and imagined smells of Leninsky Prospekt, the factory coal fumes, the Arctic frost, the black exhaust of my mother's cardboard cigarettes. Two figures emerged from behind a burned-out milk stand and approached me. I stood there waiting for them, my hands protectively cupping myself but my jacket open and my tie askew. I did not say a word to them. What was there to say? I heard them clicking their rounds into place, but my gaze fell elsewhere. I was mesmerized, as always, by the orange-yellow aurora of pollution hanging over the horizon of the contrived city, that juncture where snow banks and apartment towers meet to form nothing. ♦



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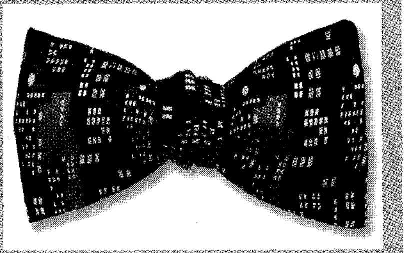

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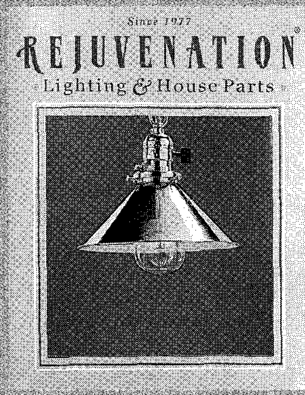

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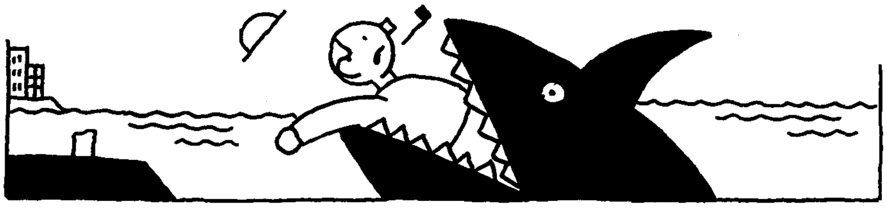


THE THEATRE

BEEHIVES OVER BROADWAY

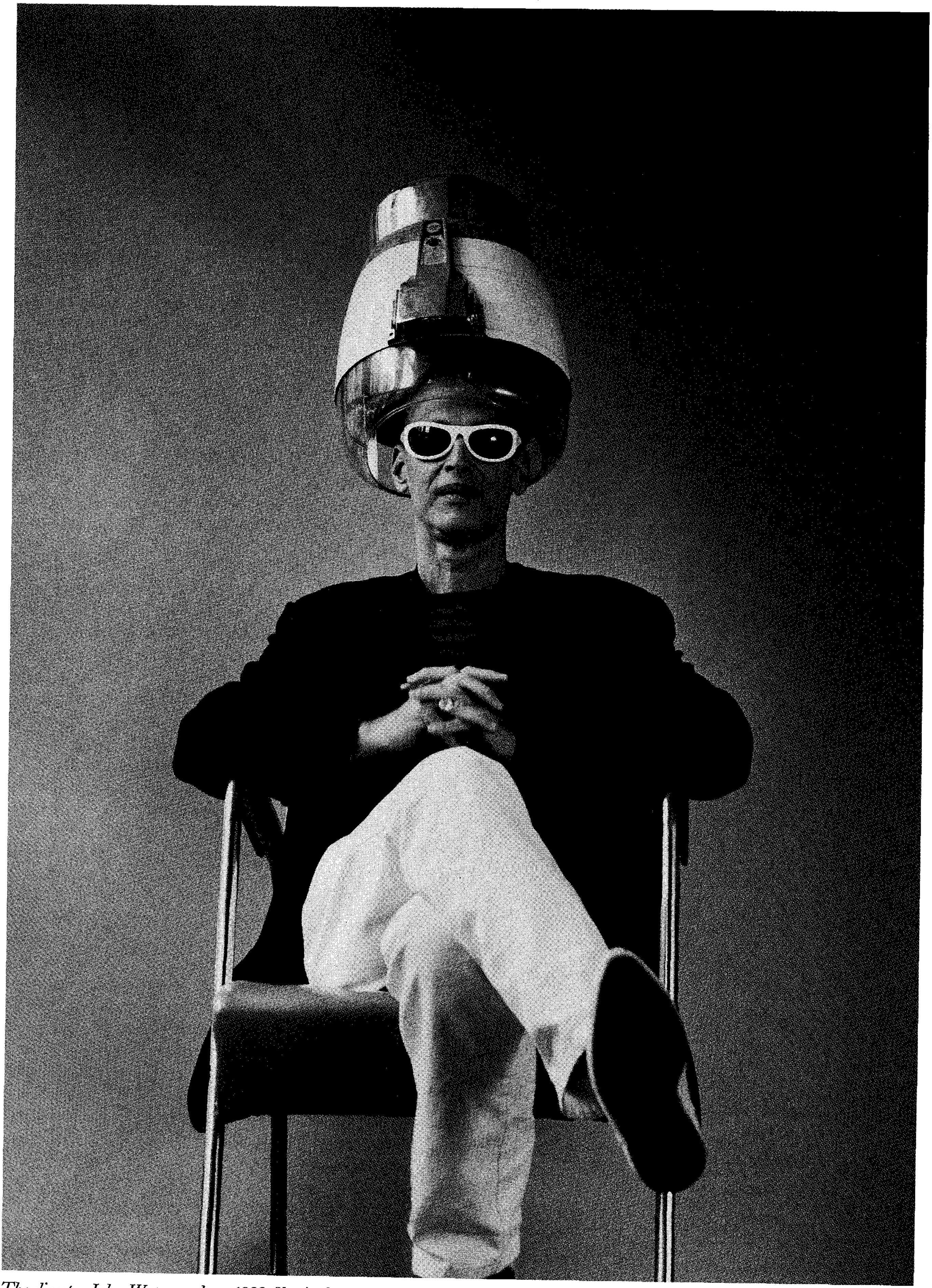
Life is an endless platter party in "Hairspray."

BY DAVID DENBY

When Harvey Fierstein has something seriously funny to say, he sets it up by tuning his voice low. Then, opening a reserve tank of testosterone, he drops another half octave for the kicker. Fierstein's famous vocal instrument is no black-sable bass, even and smooth. If it were, he would belong in the opera house. But Fierstein (despite a fifteen-year absence) belongs utterly to the theatre, where his voice never loses its raspy, ninety-five-cent-kazoo quality and its hint of Bensonhurst snarl. In "Hairspray," the exhilaratingly funny and warmhearted new musical comedy (at the Neil Simon), Fierstein plays Mrs. Edna Turnblad, Baltimore housewife and matriarch of the ironing board. A defeated dressmaker who takes in laundry, Mrs. Turnblad wears faded floral-print housecoats, scuffies, and Supp-hose, and speaks with authority on the marital problems of Debbie Reynolds and the Gabor sisters. In the satirical 1988 John Waters movie on which the musical is based, this voluminous and disconsolate hausfrau was played by the late female impersonator Divine, who spoke in a gentle, reproving whine. A few years later, in the very straight film comedy "Mrs. Doubtfire," Robin Williams, appearing in drag as an elderly nanny, adopted sweet and quivering tones. But Harvey Fierstein, shaved, plucked, and padded out to a stocky grandeur, is not a man pretending to be a woman; he is a man openly playing a woman, and he speaks in his own voice. From its opening number, "Hairspray" leaps off the stage, and Fierstein is the soul of the show. We care more for him than we do for the principal character, Mrs. Turnblad's chubby teen-age daughter, Tracy (Marissa Jaret Winokur), who wants to accomplish three things in life—to dance, to make out with the best-looking boy in town, and to integrate "The Corny Collins Show," a local TV teen-dance program. "Hairspray," with its rotund mother-daughter pair, is all about shooting for your dreams, first by accepting what you are and then by accepting others for what *they* are. How could Fierstein use anything but his own voice?

David Rockwell's sets and William Ivey Long's costumes place us in deepest, gaudiest teen America, in the year 1962—that distant but much memorialized era between Elvis's early triumphs and the emergence of the Beatles, the period of doo-wop, tail fins, and candy colors. Forty years later, it looks like a time of naïvely eager commerce and irony-free fantasy. When we first see Tracy Turnblad, she's asleep and we seem to be looking at her from above—she's lying in a bed that hangs vertically, surrounded by an irregular rectangle of pink shag carpet, strewn with hairspray cans, hairbrushes, and 45s. Tracy wakes up, steps out of bed, and, in a kind of Teresa Brewer hiccup, embarks on the composer Marc Shaiman's version of "Oh, What a Beautiful Morning." "Oh-oh-oh," she sings, and then, her voice soaring, "Good morning, Baltimore." The set dissolves, and the city streets come together around her like the pieces of a puzzle.

The nostalgia in "Hairspray" may be giddy, but it's free of condescension to the characters or to the period. At its best, the show creates the genuine emotions that the lower forms of camp often make fun of. At the same time, it offers a more highly distilled variety of sticky aerosoled cosmetic than the movie did. John Waters, the Baltimore film auteur with the slicked-back hair and pencil-line mustache of a carnival magician, first achieved notoriety with such calculated outrages as "Pink Flamingos" (1972) and "Female Trouble" (1975). And in 1981 he perpetrated the scratch-and-sniff Odorama cards—as a young man, he liked to stink up the joint. The movie "Hairspray" had its gross-out moments involving zits and scurrying rodents and the appearance in minor roles of such frightening celebrities as Sonny Bono and Pia Zadora. Yet it was also a successful attempt to go mainstream; the movie was amazingly generous and, occasionally, rather sober and slow. Working in film, Waters was forced to observe the minimal realism of actual streets and bedrooms. But the musical suffers no such constraints. It combines and highlights the period artifacts in an ecstasy of gorgeous bad taste, offered with just enough invention to achieve lyrical wit. A poster for an all-black girl trio comes to life: the ladies in red satin and bouffant wigs step down from their graphic and begin to sing and dance. Cameo photographs arrayed around Tracy become real people, and almost every musical number acquires a backup group demurely commenting "Bop-be-ba, ba-ba-ba-ba" or "Doot-doot-do-doot." On "The Corny Collins Show," where new dances are introduced, the affable Corny runs a "Miss Teenage Hairspray" contest, and the anxious-to-please kids smile frantically and show off their erect hairdos. The men wear cardigans and narrow ties, the women yellow or lime-green dresses with stiff, conelike skirts. What "Hairspray" is parodying was trivial to begin with, so the parodies don't sting—and they're not meant to. Instead, they break free into some goofy new realm of pop Dada. Twenty years ago, John Waters was called "subversive"; he enjoyed teasing the squares by dropping little turds of dismay into their lives. But this show is purely celebratory—



The director John Waters, whose 1988 film is the basis for the musical. Photograph by Dudley Reed.

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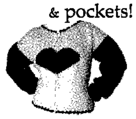

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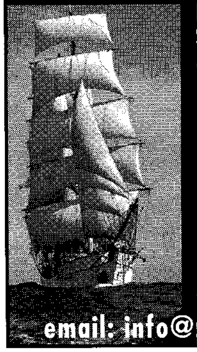

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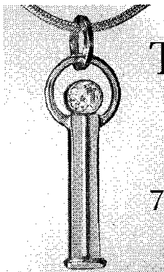

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there's no dismay left, only laughing wonder.

At times, "Hairspray" feels like one long delirious platter party. While you're watching the show, it's hard to imagine that anything but singing and dancing could matter in life—the grinning theatricality of Jack O'Brien's direction and Jerry Mitchell's choreography is so strong that a five-year-old would respond to it. "Hairspray" is a dance musical, and for a moviegoer who loves dance, and who has suffered over the years through such films as "Flashdance," "Staying Alive," "The Cotton Club," and the recent "Moulin Rouge," the show is a restorative experience. Again and again in those movies, the dancers' work was destroyed by a jumpy camera and constant cutting. The result was a series of editing-table triumphs and choreographic disasters in which movement was broken down into frenetic fragments. A simple rule for both film and theatre: The full, head-to-toe view of the dancer's body should always reign supreme. In "Hairspray," Jerry Mitchell has drawn on novelty dances of the early sixties—the Twist, the Madison, the (fictional) Stricken Chicken—and worked them up into long, long numbers that may begin in one set and continue in another but never obscure the dancers' bodies. Mitchell uses whirling fists, flapping elbows, and bone-socket jerks—dance vernacular turned into dazzling choral movement. In the same way, Marc Shaiman's score (with lyrics by him and Scott Wittman) combines lovable period tropes and a pounding Broadway beat. Several of the numbers start quietly and build to shattering, anthem-like finishes. Shaiman's work is extremely adroit. It's also a little monotonous—I wish more of the songs, effective as they are onstage, were liberated from the beat.

For Waters's gross-out humor, the book writers, Mark O'Donnell and Thomas Meehan, have substituted Broadway bawdiness, most of it very funny. The show has an underlay of sex hunger that keeps breaking through the period repressions like daisies through cracks in the cement. The spritzed hairspray itself comes off as a kind of teen Viagra, stiffening everything in sight. The diminutive comic actress Jackie Hoffman, who has the gape and the hanging jaw of a puppet on a string, barges around the stage looking for someone to devour. She plays, at different times, a sadistic mother, a lesbian gym teacher, and a stick-wielding prison guard. She melts at last when she clutches a young black man around the loins. That joke is not the show's finest moment: O'Donnell and Meehan repeatedly mock the whites' fear of blacks—of crime and "race music"—yet they're not above indulging Broadway-blue stereotypes about black sexuality. But, over all, blacks appear in the show as an irrepressible minority with the talent and juice to make things happen. The more adventurous white kids, led by Tracy, drop in on Motormouth Maybelle's record shop, where they are introduced to the intoxicating pleasures of rhythm and blues. Motormouth (Mary Bond Davis), a fleshy blonde, proud of both flesh and hair color, sings the stirring "I Know Where I've Been," and the show bizarrely turns into a civil-rights protest in which Tracy and her friends storm the TV station and demand that blacks be let into the teen sock hop every afternoon, rather than restricted to a monthly "Negro day." It's a sweet idea, but blacks in the audience may shrug, and whites may wonder why they're being freshly congratulated for something that happened a long time ago.

"Hairspray" is much more serious about self-realization than about race. The Turnblads, mother and daughter, come out of the Hefty Hideaway specialty shop in matching outfits of iridescent paisley and feathers, and Harvey Fierstein makes a grand entrance at the climax of the evening in flaming pink. "Hairspray" tells us to be proud of what we are, which is hardly an original sentiment on Broadway. You might even say it's the essential message of all musical comedy, since singing and dancing are often the expression of buried desires. But the show triumphantly combines so many forms of theatre—drag revue, rock musical, R. & B. concert, social-protest play, tenderloin burlesque—that its conventional ideas soar above cliché, elevated by stunning professionalism and by gusts of love. The happiness of dancing, of dressing up, of being fat, being black, being gay, being straight—there isn't much that's *not* celebrated by this show before it sends its audience out of the theatre strong and confident and ready for anything. ♦

A CRITIC AT LARGE

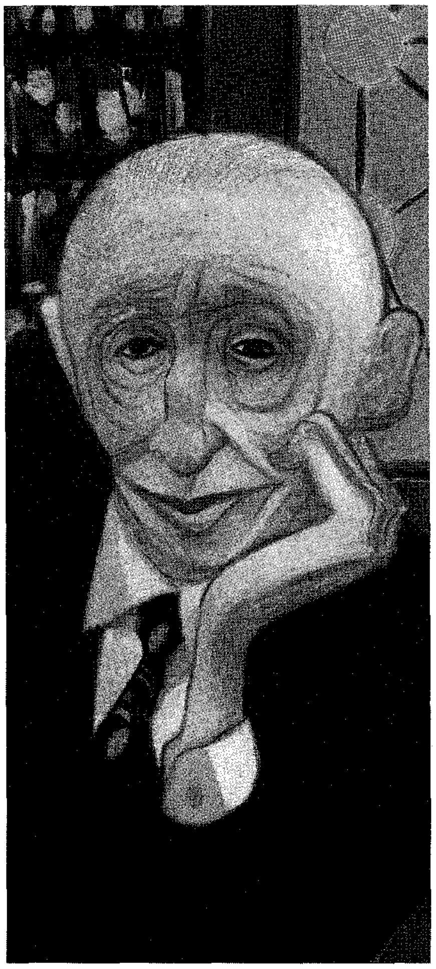
THE HERETIC

The mythic passions of Gershom Scholem.

BY CYNTHIA OZICK

One morning early in February, 1917, Gerhard Scholem, a tall, jug-eared, acutely bookish young man of nineteen, sat at breakfast with his parents in their comfortable Berlin apartment. It was an hour of family crisis. Gerhard, the youngest of four sons, was the only one still living at home. The three others had all been conscripted for the Kaiser's war. Reinhold and Erich were solid German patriots like their father; Reinhold went so far as to call himself, in right-wing lingo, a *Deutschnationaler*—a German nationalist. Werner, Gerhard's senior by two years, was a hothead and a leftist—he later became a committed Communist. He had been wounded in the foot in the Serbian campaign and was recuperating in an Army hospital. Limping, wearing his uniform, he abandoned his bed and made his way to an antiwar demonstration. He was arrested and charged with treason.

Over the uneaten pastries, yet another brand of treason was brewing. Gerhard had declared himself to be a Zionist, and was openly preparing for emigration to Palestine. Two years earlier, exposed as the author of an antiwar flyer circulated by a Zionist youth group, he had been expelled from high school. Arthur Scholem, the paterfamilias of this opinionated crew (half of them mutinous), could do nothing about Werner, who was in the hands of the military. But Gerhard was near enough to feel his father's rage, and Arthur Scholem had devised a punishment of Prussian thoroughness. A businessman, he was demanding, authoritarian, uncompromising, practical above all; he presided over a successful printing enterprise and a household that could keep both a cook and a maid. At Christmas, there was an elaborately decorated tree, surrounded by heaps of presents. When Gerhard was fourteen, he found under the tree a framed portrait of Theodor Herzl, the founder of modern Zionism. "We selected this picture for you because you are so interested in Zionism," his mother explained. ("From then on," Scholem commented decades later, "I left the house at Christmastime.")



The great scholar of Kabbalah knew "the terrors of which myths are made."

LORENZO MATTOTTI

This interest, in Arthur Scholem's view, had increasingly turned excessive and unreasonable. Gerhard had not only hurled himself into the study of Hebrew; he was entering, with the identical zeal he gave to Latin and German literature, the capacious universe of the Talmud, an oceanic compilation of interpretive Biblical commentaries. Every element of these ancient canonical texts attracted him: their ethical and jurisprudential preoccupations; the vitality, in equal measure, of their rational and imaginative insights; their famous dialogic and often dissenting discourse across the generations. Martin Buber's romanticized work and Heinrich Graetz's panoramic "History of the Jews" (both of which Scholem eventually took issue with) were the initial stimuli, but he went on to search out the Zionist theoreticians of the time, and anything in Judaica that a bibliomaniacal teen-age boy haunting second-hand bookshops could afford.

All this was too much for the elder Scholem, who paid dues, after all, to the vehemently anti-Zionist Central Association of German Citizens of the Jewish Faith. The faith might be tepidly Jewish; the primary allegiance—the unquestioned identity, both social and personal—was German. Arthur Scholem believed himself to be an established and accepted member of a stable society. No wonder "the discussions at our family table became heated," as Scholem wryly points out in "From Berlin to Jerusalem," his concise little memoir of 1977. But by then Gerhard had long since been transmuted into Gershom.

On that February morning in 1917, the family table was less heated than quietly tense. Arthur Scholem had made his preparations; he waited. The doorbell rang, heralding the arrival of a registered letter. It had been composed two nights earlier, and was addressed to Gerhard:

> I have decided to cut off all support to you. Bear in mind the following: you have until the first of March to leave my house, and you will be forbidden to enter it again without my permission. On March first, I will transfer 100 marks to your account so that you will not be left without means. Anything more than this you cannot expect from me. . . . Whether I will agree to finance your further studies after the war depends upon your future behavior.
> Your father, Arthur Scholem

The father could not fathom a young man opposed to a patriotic war. Having a prodigy on his hands bewildered him—a rebellious prodigy given to devouring Plato and Kant, uncommonly gifted in higher mathematics, and determined to add to this conceptual stew an unfashionable, unpredictable, altogether obstinate dedication to Jewish history and thought. And, beyond these perplexities, Arthur Scholem scarcely recognized what Gerhard, in choosing to become Gershom (the name of a son of the Biblical Moses), was crucially repudiating—and

"Me? I thought they were your anniversary surprise!"

would continue to repudiate for the rest of his life. Despite the younger Scholem's ardent mastery of European culture, it was Europe, and Germany in particular, that he meant to renounce. His father's loyalties—the passionate love of the *Vaterland* that the majority of German Jews plainly felt—he could see only as self-deception. The Jews might be in love with Germany, but Germany was not in love with the Jews. To a Jewish friend who had professed "boundless adoration for German art, Goethe, and our contemporary Rudolf Borchardt," and who provocatively added, "I hate Martin Buber with all my heart," the nineteen-year-old Scholem responded with what he called "a tremendous intuition" for Judaism:

> I confess that I've never had such a central relationship with any other thing; it has commanded my full attention from the time I began to work and think for myself (to wit, from the age of fourteen). The confrontation with German culture which presents so many Jews with such painful dilemmas has never been a problem for me. Nor has the absolutely un-Jewish atmosphere in my home been able to change this. I have never found or sought out values whose legitimacy was rooted in the German essence. Even the German language, which I speak, disappears for me completely when compared to Hebrew.

To another correspondent, a few days before, he had announced, "We [Jews] have had a relationship with Europe only to the degree that Europe has acted upon us as a destructive stimulation." Both these assertions were made from a bed in a military hospital, where, he reported, "the heavy footsteps of anti-Semitism are always thumping behind my back." Like his older brothers before him, he had been inducted into the military; unlike Werner, he had not been wounded in battle. He was, instead, in a mental ward, suffering from a kind of nervous disorder—and then again it was an invention, "a colossal fabrication," as he put it, to get himself out of the Army. In fact, it was partly one and partly the other, and it succeeded in freeing him. "I'll be able to *work* once again," he crowed. "I won't be squandering my youth in these odious circumstances, and I can celebrate my twentieth birthday wearing civilian clothes."

The three-month interval between his father's throwing him out of the house and his enforced Army stint had turned out to be remarkably fruitful. He went to live at the Pension Struck, a boarding house in an unfashionable neighborhood of Berlin catering to a group of Russian Jewish intellectuals who held perfervid, if conflicting, Zionist views. Among the polyglot and fiercely literary boarders was a future President of Israel, and it was here that Scholem undertook a translation from the Yiddish (a language new to him) of a volume of memorial essays devoted to Jewish victims of Arab rioters in Palestine: his first full-length publication. During this same period, he began his enduring friendship with the Hebrew novelist S. J. Agnon, who would one day be awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, and whose stories Scholem rendered into pellucid German. Scholem had already encountered Walter Benjamin at a Jewish discussion club for young people—"an utterly original mind," he marvelled. He was then seventeen; Benjamin was five years older. Not long afterward, they met again, as university students. (Despite Scholem's expulsion from high school, he was permitted to take his graduation exams and managed to gain university entrance through an academic loophole intended for Junkers.) The two talked of phenomenology and philology; they talked of socialism and historiography; they talked of Chinese philosophy and of Baudelaire, Pindar, and Hölderlin; they argued over Brecht and Zola and Zionism; they were mutually immersed in Kafka. These astonishing exchanges—the bulk of them through a decades-long correspondence indefatigably pledged to ideas, experimental, often playful, and on Benjamin's part somewhat elusive—continued until Benjamin's suicide, in 1940, in flight from the Germans. Scholem was frequently the first reader of Benjamin's newest work, and Benjamin was briefly inspired by Scholem's example to study Hebrew, though he never progressed much beyond the alphabet. Both these extraordinary young men were beguiled by the transcendent nature of language. Both were out to re-create intellectual history—Benjamin with the uncertainty of his genius, wavering from subject to subject, Scholem with the certainty of his, leaping with scholarly ferocity into the hitherto untouchable cauldron of Jewish mysticism.

It was untouchable because it was far out of the mainstream of Judaism, excluded by rabbinic consensus. Normative Judaism saw itself as given over to moral rationalism: to codes of ethics, including the primacy of charity, and a coherent set of personal and societal practices; to the illuminations of midrash, the charms of ethical lore—but mythologies and esoteric mysteries were cast out. The Zohar, a mystical treatise, was grudgingly admitted for study, but only in maturity, lest it dazzle the student into irrationality. For normative Judaism, ripe sobriety was all;

or, if not all, then a significant social ideal.

Scholem saw something else, and he saw it from an early age. Unlike Freud, who dismissed religion as illusion, Scholem more ambitiously believed it to be as crucial for the structure of the human mind as language itself. At twenty, he wrote to Escha Burchhardt (whom he later married and divorced), "Philology is truly a secret science and the only legitimate form of historical science that has existed until now. It is the greatest confirmation of my view of the central importance of Tradition, though of course in a new sense of the word." He named his idea "the philosophy of the Hebrew language" and exclaimed, prophetically, "Oh, if only someday these things could be the focus of my worthy labors!"

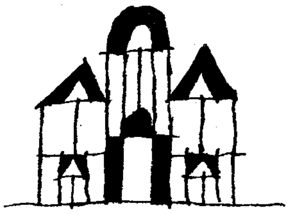
Two years on, he was a doctoral student who described his dissertation as "a vast foundational philological-philosophical monograph on an early kabbalistic text from around the year 1230. . . . Nothing worthwhile that's any longer than four pages has been written about it." His work on the text, "Sefer ha-Bahir," was pioneering scholarship, but it was far more than that. In the framework of conventional Jewish historiography, it signalled a revolution. Scholem was divulging a tradition hidden underneath, and parallel to, normative Jewish religious expression. Below the ocean of interpretive commentary lay another ocean, also of interpretive commentary, but in imagistic and esoteric guise. Scholem's encyclopedic research took him through the centuries; no one before him had ever systematically ordered and investigated the manifold varieties of Jewish mysticism. The position of classical Judaism was that the essence of God is unknowable: "Thou canst not see My Face." The Kabbalists sought not only to define and characterize the Godhead—through a kind of spiritualized cosmogonic physics—but to experience it. Kabbalah had been shunned for its claims of ecstatic ascent to the hidden sublime; it had been scorned for its connection to folk religion and magic.

Scholem was determined to uncover the more exalted strata of a suppressed tradition, partly to complete and clarify the historical record, and partly to disclose arcane and majestic imaginative constructs, themselves marvels of the human intellect. It was a kind of literary archeology. His chief excavating tool was philology—the study of texts and their origins. Scholem has been compared to one of the greatest of the grand exegetes and codifiers of Jewish tradition: Maimonides, the twelfth-century physician and polymath, who read Torah with an Aristotelian eye. But Maimonides was a proponent of rationalism. Scholem was in pursuit of the opposite. He looked to theosophy, as manifested in Kabbalah: "those religious streams within Judaism," he explained, "which strive to arrive at a religious consciousness beyond intellectual apprehension, and which may be attained by man's delving into himself by means of contemplation, and the inner illumination which results from this contemplation."

This is almost too general a definition, given the complexities of the many generations and branches of Kabbalah (a word that means tradition, literally "what is received") in its luxuriant fecundity from the first millennium to its latest expression in the eighteenth century. The most influential of all these movements came to fruition in the town of Safed, in Galilee, in the sixteenth century, when a community of initiates gathered around Rabbi Isaac Luria and began to compose the astonishing works that make up what is called the Lurianic Kabbalah. Not all the Lurianic ideas were new, but they expanded in an original direction under the pressure of one of the most catastrophic upheavals in Jewish history: the Inquisitorial persecutions of the Jews of Spain, and their expulsion after a golden age of high creativity. Here was yet another historic exile (the destruction of the Second Temple, in the year 70, inaugurating the dispersion, was primal), and its thunderous effects had their echo in a cataclysmic symbolism.

In the beginning—indeed, before the beginning—God's luminous essence filled the pleroma, the stuff of nothingness that was everywhere. Then God performed an act of *tsimtsum*, self-limitation, contracting in order to make room for Creation. "Without contraction there is no creation, as everything is Godhead," Scholem writes. "Therefore, already in its earliest origins, the creation is a kind of exile, in that it involves God removing Himself from the center of His essence to His secret places." But certain lights, or sparks, or brilliant emanations of God trickled out nevertheless. These were the *sefiroth*, God's qualities or potentialities—the vital ten arteries, so to speak, of His Being. They can be listed as Primeval Will; Wisdom; Intuition; Grace; Judgment; Compassion; Eternity; Splendor; All Fructifying Forces; and, last, the *Shekhinah*, "the hidden radiance of the totality of the hidden divine life which dwells in every created and existing being." These powerful divine lights flowed into the vessels that are the material of the created world; too fragile to contain such magnitudes, they broke apart, scattering the godly sparks. Some fell among the shards of the sundered vessels and were held captive, themselves damaged and given over to darkness. Because of this rupture, called *shevirah*, the ideal processes of Creation have been thwarted, and, ever since, nothing has been in its right place; all is exile. In Safed there arose, finally, the concept of *tikkun*, the reintegration of what has been fragmented, the correction of confusion, the return of harmony. In this way, the Kabbalists of Galilee, through a cosmological myth of exile and redemption, were able to map a people's shattered experience and adumbrate a vision of restoration.

It may have been in the early nineteen-forties (there are no living witnesses, and no one of the current generation is certain just when) that Scholem was invited to New York to deliver a lecture on Kabbalah at the Jewish Theological Seminary. He was introduced by Saul Lieberman, a leading Talmudic eminence, and thereby an adherent of Jewish rationalism. "Nonsense is nonsense," Professor Lieberman pronounced, "but the history of nonsense is scholarship." Whether Scholem responded to this now legendary maxim is not known. But the immensity, and the passion, of his scholarship intimates that he did not include visionary symbolism among the artifacts of nonsense.



In 1923, at twenty-five, Scholem set off for Palestine, as he had promised ten years before. He had completed his dissertation summa cum laude, and might easily have attained a post in a German university. Instead, he arrived in Jerusalem with six hundred volumes of Kabbalistic literature and no academic prospects. But there were plenty of secondhand bookshops: Jerusalem, he noted, "was saturated with old Hebrew books the way a sponge is saturated with water." By 1925, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem was established (it had been in the planning stage since 1913), and before long Scholem became its first professor of Jewish mysticism. And now began that torrent of innovative historical and literary inquiry which quickly marked him as a twentieth-century luminary. He was not a man penetrating a field of learning; he was a field of learning penetrating the world. He wrote in a Hebrew that rivalled his native German in literary quality. He read Greek, Latin, Arabic, and Aramaic. His English was fluent and polished. "Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism," lectures composed chiefly in English and first published in 1941, has become the standard introductory work: the dedication is "to the memory of Walter Benjamin, a friend of a lifetime." Scholem's magnum opus, "Sabbatai Sevi: The Mystical Messiah," which appeared in English translation in 1973, is a consummate history of a seventeenth-century messiah figure who aroused, among the diasporic Jewish masses, the hope of a return to Jerusalem; it is a book enormously suggestive of the origins of Christianity.

All this and more—lectures, teaching, travel abroad, a second marriage, to Fanya Freud—Scholem accomplished during times of tumult and violence. In Germany, the crisis of postwar currency inflation was followed by the rise of Nazism. Scholem's brother Werner, against whom the earlier charge of treason had been ameliorated, was again arrested, both as a former Communist and as a Jew; he was finally murdered in Buchenwald in 1940. In the late nineteen-thirties, Scholem's widowed mother and his brothers Reinhold and Erich escaped to Australia. During these same years, Palestine was troubled by periodic Arab rioting, notably in 1920, 1921, 1929, 1936, and 1939. "For the past three months, we in Jerusalem have been living under a state of siege," Scholem wrote to Benjamin in August, 1936. "There's a considerable amount of terrorism. . . . A few days ago a colleague of mine who teaches Arabic literature was murdered in his study while reading the Bible. . . . No one knows whether someone will toss a bomb his way or around the next corner." In June, 1939, he again told Benjamin, "We live in terror," and spoke of the "capitulation of the English"—the Mandate power—"in the face of violence." And in 1948 there was outright war when the surrounding Arab nations, rejecting the United Nations plan for the partition of Palestine, sent five invading armies to converge on the newborn Jewish state. Whole sections of Jerusalem were destroyed or overrun. Before Scholem's death, in 1982, he had lived through the terror incursions of 1956, the Six-Day War of 1967, and the Yom Kippur attacks of 1973.

Scholem defined his Zionism as metaphysically and historically rooted rather than political. "I don't give a rap about the problem of the state," he said, and styled himself an anarchist. Nevertheless, he joined colleagues at the Hebrew University in the formation, in 1925, of Brit Shalom (Peace Covenant), a political group favoring a binational state, which was to include both Arabs and Jews on equal terms—but, since few Arabs were attracted to the idea, and, of these, some were assassinated by other Arabs, it failed. He had once affirmed that by leaving Europe behind he was stepping out of world history in order to reënter Jewish history; yet world history, it seemed, had an uncanny habit of following the Jews wherever they were. Scholem was compelled to endure intermittent chaos even as he probed into Kabbalistic theories of exile and redemption.

He also wrote letters. His father, toward whom he was never cordial, had died some months after Scholem's emigration. But he wrote often to his mother, who replied copiously, and now and then shipped him the familiar delicacies he requested—marzipan and sausage. He wrote to old friends still in Germany; to new friends in America; to his students; to Walter Benjamin, Theodor Adorno, Martin Buber, Hannah Arendt, George Lichtheim, George Steiner, Jürgen Habermas, Friedrich Dürrenmatt, Elias Canetti, Daniel Bell, Emil Fackenheim, Leo Strauss, Franz Rosenzweig, and scores of others. The German edition of the letters occupies two thousand pages. The recently published "Gershom Scholem: A Life in Letters, 1914-1982" (Harvard; $35), edited and translated by Anthony David Skinner, is a lively and considerably shorter collection, which follows Scholem from his fevered adolescence to the sovereign authority of his final years. The editor's illuminating biographical summaries set out useful links from decade to decade, but it is Scholem's uncompromising voice that gives this volume its unified force and striking crescendos. In their unstinting energy, the letters show a man exactly where he wanted to be, and conscious of exactly why.

His correspondents who were fleeing Germany were not so sure. Scholem repeatedly offered refuge to Benjamin, holding out the hope of a post at the Hebrew University; Benjamin repeatedly vacillated, finally admitting to a procrastination "which is second nature to me when it comes to the most important situations in my life." To Scholem's exasperation, Benjamin was contemplating the feasibility of an island off Spain. "You could, of course, do your literary work here," Scholem countered. "Jerusalem offers more than Ibiza: first of all, there are people like us here; second, there are books. . . . But it seems to us doubtful that you'd feel comfortable in a land in which you took no direct part. . . . The only people who can survive all of the difficulties here are those who are fully devoted to this land and to Judaism." Benjamin, Scholem had come to recognize long before, had refused any such devotion. It was Hannah Arendt (then Hannah Stern), writing as a refugee in the South of France, who informed Scholem of Benjamin's suicide.

But for Scholem the most commanding chronicler of the growing Nazi harassment of Jews was Betty Scholem, his despairing mother. In a flood of anguished letters from Berlin (reminiscent of Victor Klemperer's diaries of gradual engulfment), she was recording a week-by-week tightening of the German noose. "I cannot digest what is happening," she wailed. "I'm completely speechless. I simply can't imagine that there are not 10,000 or 1,000 upright Christians who refuse to go along by raising their voice in protest." Her accounts of her futile trips to the offices of the Nazi police to appeal for information about the imprisoned Werner have the resonance of an atrocity foretold. In March, 1933, commenting on the Jewish lawyers, teachers, and physicians who were being barred from their professions, she wrote:

> It's a real stroke of luck that you're out of harm's way! Now, suddenly, I want to see everyone in Palestine!! When I only think of the outcry heard among German Jews when Zionism began! Your father and grandfather Hermann L. and the entire Central Verein beat themselves on the breast and said with absolute conviction, "We are Germans!" And now we're being told that we are *not* Germans after all!

Despite intervals of relative quiet, the Jewish population of Palestine was never entirely out of harm's way; but his mother's terrified response to the danger in Germany, years after his own prescient repudiations, left a bitter imprint on many of his later exchanges. Scholem declined to meet with Heidegger (as Buber had done), because Heidegger had been an unabashed Nazi. He was impatient with tendentious distortions of Jewish history. When an editor of *The New York Review of Books* asked him to review Arthur Koestler's "The Thirteenth Tribe: The Khazar Empire and Its Heritage," Scholem's reply—"sensationalist humbug"—was scathing:

> Sigmund Freud told the Jews their religion was foisted upon them by an Egyptian, so that there was nothing for the Jews to be proud of. The Jews found it baseless but rather amusing. Some Gentiles loved it because it would [teach] those supercilious Jews a lesson. Arthur Koestler wants to give them the rest by telling them that they were not even Jews and that those damned Ashkenazim from Russia, Romania, and Hungary who had invented Zionism had not even the right to ask for Israel as their homeland—which their Khazaric forefathers had never seen. . . . There is nothing more to be said by me about Koestler's scholarship.

In 1962, as part of a postwar, post-Holocaust effort toward official public remorse in Germany, Scholem was invited to contribute to a volume intended as homage to "the indestructible German-Jewish dialogue." He answered with a trenchant polemic:

> There is no question that Jews tried to enter into a dialogue with Germans, and from all possible perspectives and standpoints: now demanding, now pleading and imploring; now crawling on their hands and knees, now defiant; now with all possible compelling tones of dignity, now with a god-forsaken lack of self-respect. . . . No one responded to this cry. . . . The boundless ecstasy of Jewish enthusiasm never earned a reply in any tone that could count as a productive response to Jews as Jews—that is, a tone that would have addressed what the Jews had to give and not only what they had to give up. To whom, then, did the Jews speak in this famous German-Jewish dialogue? They spoke only to themselves. . . . In the final analysis, it's true that Germans now acknowledge there was an enormous amount of Jewish creativity. This does not change the fact that you can't have a dialogue with the dead.

This was not Scholem's most acerbic riposte, though it touched on one of the central passions of his historical thinking. A year later, in 1963, Hannah Arendt published "Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil," an account of the trial of Adolf Eichmann, the high-ranking S.S. officer who had ordered the deportation of Jews to the death camps, and whom Israeli agents had captured in his Argentine hideout. Scholem's rebuttal ignited an intellectual conflagration that tore beyond the boundaries of their private exchange into a ferocious public quarrel. Arendt and Scholem had been warm correspondents for two decades. But as early as 1946 a fault line—not yet a crevasse—opened in their friendship. Arendt had sent Scholem "Zionism Reconsidered," an essay he dismissed as a "patently anti-Zionist, warmed-over version of Communist criticism" and "an act of political balderdash." He accused her of attacking the Jews of Palestine "for maintaining an otherworldly separation from the rest of mankind, but," he contended, "when these same Jews make efforts to fend for themselves, in a world whose evil you yourself never cease to emphasize, you react with a derision that itself stems from some otherworldly source." He set out his credo, both personal and political:

> I am a nationalist and am wholly unmoved by ostensibly "progressive" denunciations of a viewpoint that people repeatedly, even in my earliest youth, deemed obsolete. . . . I am a "sectarian" and have never

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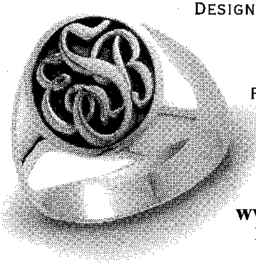

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> been ashamed of expressing in print my conviction that sectarianism can offer us something decisive and positive. . . . I cannot blame the Jews if they ignore so-called progressive theories which no one else in the world has ever practiced. . . . The Arabs have not agreed to a single solution that includes Jewish immigration, whether it be federal, national, or binational. . . . [They] are primarily interested not in the morality of our political convictions but in whether or not we are here in Palestine at all. . . . I consider it abundantly obvious (and I hardly need emphasize this to you) that the political career of Zionism . . . has created a situation full of despair, doubt, and compromise—precisely because it takes place on earth, not on the moon. . . . The Zionist movement shares this dialectical experience of the Real (and all its catastrophic possibilities) with all other movements that have taken it upon themselves to change something in the real world.

He concluded by charging Arendt with cynical rhetoric aimed "against something that is for the Jewish people of life-or-death importance." Her view, he believed, was motivated by a fear of being classed as a reactionary, "one of the most depressing phenomena to be seen among clever Jews." He knew this, he said, from reading *Partisan Review*.

Vitriol ebbed and affection resumed. In the long run, it was a friendship that could not be sustained, and with the appearance of "Eichmann in Jerusalem" Scholem's regard for Arendt dissolved; in old age he felt their dispute to have been "one of the most bitter controversies of my life." He disposed of "the banality of evil" as no better than a slogan: it contradicted and undermined the "radical evil" Arendt had testified to in "The Origins of Totalitarianism," her earlier study. He argued against her merciless condemnation of the Jewish Councils whom the Germans had forced to run the ghettos: "I don't presume to judge. I wasn't there." He disagreed that the prosecution had failed to prove its case, even while he asserted his opposition to hanging Eichmann: "We should not make it easier for the Germans to confront their past. . . . He now stands as a representative for everyone." He did not altogether quarrel with Arendt's criticism of the weaker elements of a people in extremis, but, "to the degree that there really was weakness," he protested, "your emphasis is, so far as I can tell, completely one-sided and leaves the reader with a feeling of rage and fury." Rage and fury boiled up from a still deeper source:

> It is the heartless, the downright *malicious* tone you employ in dealing with a topic that so profoundly concerns the center of our life. There is something in the Jewish language that is completely indefinable, yet fully concrete—what the Jews call *ahavath Israel*, or love for the Jewish people. With you, my dear Hannah, as with so many intellectuals coming from the German left, there is no trace of it. . . . In treating such a theme, isn't there a place for the humble German expression "tact of the heart"?

Arendt's response was unrelievedly hostile. She denied coming from the German left; she had come from German philosophy. She had no love for any nation or collective. As for her opinion of Zionism, the Jews no longer believed in God; they believed only in themselves. "In this sense," she told him, "I don't love the Jews."

Scholem's term for what is now commonly known as the Holocaust was "the Catastrophe." In his scholarship the word hardly appears. But it is clear from the letters that the Catastrophe was one of the overriding preoccupations of his life, and a clandestine presence in his books. A number of his correspondents were refugees; a few, among them his most treasured friend, were suicides. At the close of the war, he roamed Europe, rescuing the surviving remnants of Judaica libraries and transporting them to Palestine. Together with Theodor Adorno, he succeeded in preserving another endangered archive: Walter Benjamin's papers, which he edited and guided into print. (Along the way, he was delighted to learn that Benjamin was a direct descendant of Heinrich Heine.)

In the public arena—exemplified by the obsessions evident in his private letters—he pursued two salient themes: the historical imperatives of modern Zionism; and German culpability and its subset, the delusions of German Jews in their unrequited love affair. As for the Germans themselves, "I can and would speak to individuals," but he withdrew from addressing the nation collectively. "We should allow time to do its work," he advised in 1952. World upheaval had buffeted his generation and cut down its most productive minds. "It's pointless to entertain any illusions," he wrote. "We have suffered a loss of blood, whose effects on the spirit and on scholarly achievement are simply unimaginable." Doubtless he had Benjamin in mind—but also the loss to intellectual history, especially in the form of advanced Jewish historiography. So it was left to Scholem to accomplish, singlehandedly, the new historiography he envisioned, until the time when his students might take up his work and his legacy. In order to understand Kabbalah, he slyly told them, they must first read Kafka.

He formulated Kabbalah as myth—he was, after all, a modern. And, as a modern transfixed by the unorthodox and the symbolic, he cast a seductive influence over realms far from his own demanding skills. Over the years, the tincture of his mind colored the work of Harold Bloom, Jacques Derrida, Umberto Eco, Jorge Luis Borges, Patrick White. These vagrant literary spores bemused him—"It's a free country," he once remarked—but he knew them to be distant from his powers and his mission. The uses of Kabbalah were not the enchantments of art or the ingenuities of criticism. For Scholem, Kabbalah was a fierce necessity, "the vengeance of myth against its conquerors." To the élitism of classical Judaism, and its judgment of Kabbalah as heresy, he retorted:

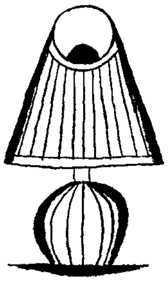
> From the start this resurgence of mythical conceptions in the thinking of the Jewish mystics provided a bond with certain impulses in the popular faith, fundamental impulses springing from the simple man's fear of life and death, to which Jewish philosophy had no satisfactory response. Jewish philosophy paid a heavy price for its disdain of the primitive levels of human life. It ignored the terrors of which myths are made. . . . Nothing so sharply distinguishes philosophers and Kabbalists as their attitude toward the problem of evil and the demonic.

For centuries, through persecutions and expulsions, forced conversions and torchings, to the abyss of the Catastrophe, Jews had suffered terror. Responding to these recurring crises, the mystical imagination had devised a cosmogony that incorporated Jewish historical experience. In Kabbalistic symbolism, with its tragic intuition that the world is broken, that all things are not in their proper places, that God, too, is in exile, Scholem saw both a confirmation of the long travail of Jewish dispersion and its consolation: the hope of redemption. In short, he saw Zionism. ♦

BRIEFLY NOTED

In the Middle of All This, *by Fred G. Leebron (Harcourt; $24).* In Leebron's fast-paced third novel, a young woman dying of cancer is caught between the competing desires of her brother Martin, a small-town college professor who is unable to let go, and her New Age husband, who does nothing to hold on. The end of the story is never in doubt, but as we follow Martin through his emotional blunders, his alcoholic benders, and his struggles to keep his own family intact, we get a sense of what it's like to be diminished rather than strengthened by life's challenges. Leebron's sharp, insightful prose gives us the mundane specifics without ever losing track of the bigger questions—of generosity and guilt, familial love and regret.

For the Sins of My Father, *by Albert DeMeo (Broadway; $24.95).* From the age of eight, Al DeMeo spent a lot of time with his father, Roy—on loan-sharking collections, in the auto-repair shop from which he directed New York's largest car-theft operation, and in Little Italy social clubs where his Mafia associates gathered. But Roy DeMeo was also abstemious, devoted to his wife and children, and a prudent businessman whose many legitimate enterprises camouflaged his criminal ones; his son's account of this complex, compartmentalized life is a rich stew of anthropological detail, confusion, and shame. It was only after Roy was murdered—shortly before Al's seventeenth birthday—that the author learned his father had been a hit man, rumored to be responsible for more than a hundred killings. This heartsick memoir charts DeMeo's attempt to come to terms with that discovery.



Republic of Dreams: Greenwich Village: The American Bohemia, 1910-1960, *by Ross Wetzsteon (Simon & Schuster; $35).* In the years before the First World War, a small group of artists and radicals, centered on Mabel Dodge's salon, Eugene O'Neill's Provincetown Players, and the socialist journal *The Masses,* turned Greenwich Village into the first American bohemia. In the process, they permanently altered the geography of American art, transforming the Village—at least, in the minds of poets and painters—into "the place where everything happens first." Weaving together biographies of eminent Villagers, including Djuna Barnes, Max Eastman, Joe Gould, E. E. Cummings, and Jackson Pollock, Wetzsteon shows just how self-conscious the mythologizing of the Village was, and incisively dissects the contradictions and conflicts—between radical politics and radical art, "poetic poverty" and bourgeois taste, sexual liberation and sexism—inherent in Village life. But he also evokes its energy and its sense of immense possibility, and appears to have recorded every good anecdote ever told about the neighborhood. The result is a book keenly aware of the limits of the bohemian ideal but nonetheless thoroughly, and winningly, in thrall to it.

Steal Away, *by C. D. Wright (Copper Canyon; $25).* It sometimes seems misleading to call Wright a poet; as her latest volume of poems makes clear, she is a chronicler of the travails that take place "between midnight and Reno," deeply interested in the social realities of America's poor and restless and in "towns with quarter-inch / phone books." Her appetite for digging up what she calls "protected and private things" results in poems about everything from sexual longing to America's incarceration system, but they are always alive to simple physical pleasures, like a trip to a twenty-four-hour supermarket. Wright has found a way to wed fragments of an iconic America to a luminously strange idiom, eerie as a tin whistle, which she uses to evoke the haunted quality of our carnal existence—the paradox that the body is the source of language, and yet language outlasts our bodies.

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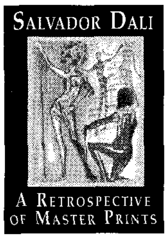

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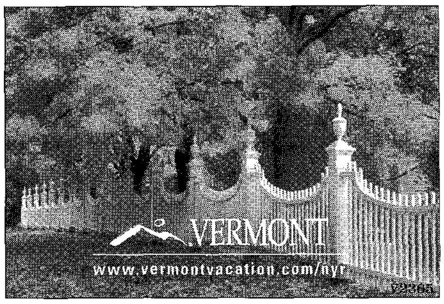

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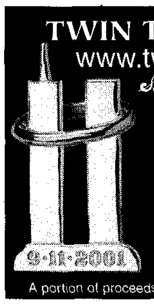

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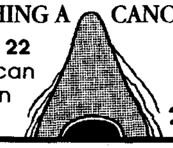

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THE ART WORLD

CHEZ JANE

Two shows celebrate a painter of sly pleasures.

BY PETER SCHJELDAHL

The poet John Ashbery once remarked, "From the moment that life cannot be one continual orgasm, real happiness is impossible and pleasant surprise is promoted to the front rank of the emotions." He might have been talking about the art of Jane Freilicher, who has been a good friend of his for half a century. Sensual ardor damped down by ironic resignation is something that Freilicher's paintings share with Ashbery's poetry. Both induce an urbane and intelligent pleasure, of a sort that I associate with T. S. Eliot's often quoted comment about Henry James: "He had a mind so fine that no idea could violate it." Ashbery, of course, is a much acclaimed literary figure, famous for the soaring abstraction and pitch-perfect vernacular of poems whose meaning is anyone's guess. Freilicher, whose landscapes and cityscapes haven't been in fashion for even a moment of her long career, has a narrower expressive range, and she works in a medium in which there is no obligation to make paraphrasable sense. Still, she is a wonderful, absurdly underrated painter.

Two shows at the National Academy of Design make the best possible case for Freilicher's subtle gifts—and, incidentally, for the academy itself, a sleepy and genteel but delectable institution that was founded, in 1825, to "promote the fine arts in America." Artists who have been entitled to append "N.A." to their names range from Thomas Cole to Robert Rauschenberg, but most have been less well known and, before a recent liberalizing trend, distinctly conservative. The academy's quarters, in a mansion near the Guggenheim Museum, retain a musty air of risk-averse old money. In this context, Freilicher's lively eye and sly wit shine. One of the current shows is a mini-retrospective of her cityscapes, which she paints looking out of her eighteenth-floor penthouse on lower Fifth Avenue. The other is the latest exhibition in a series called "The Artist's Eye," of works chosen from the academy's large permanent collection by member artists. Freilicher's selection includes a few big names, such as Thomas Eakins and John Singer Sargent, but it favors the unexpected and the offbeat. The show is an object lesson in the quickening effects of enthusiastic discernment. It teases slow delights from paintings that might otherwise command only a passing glance.

Freilicher was born Jane Niederhoffer in Brooklyn in 1924. Her mother was an amateur pianist who, as a teen-ager, played in silent-movie theatres. Her father was an Eastern European immigrant who worked in the Brooklyn courts as a translator of Spanish and Yiddish. In 1942, Jane married Jack Freilicher, a jazz pianist whose band, after the war, employed a young saxophonist named Larry Rivers. Rivers—whose death, on August 14th, extinguished one of contemporary art's most vivid personalities—became her lover and, inspired by her example, an artist. She studied with Hans Hofmann, and became fast friends and a sometime collaborator with the quartet of poets known as the New York School: Ashbery, Frank O'Hara, Kenneth Koch, and James Schuyler. In 1952, she had her first solo show, at the Tibor de Nagy Gallery. That year, she took up with Joseph Hazan, a dancer, painter, and businessman. She married Hazan in 1957 and began dividing her time between the city and a house in Water Mill, on Long Island, whose big-windowed studio and surrounding meadows and dunes continue to be constant subjects of her paintings.

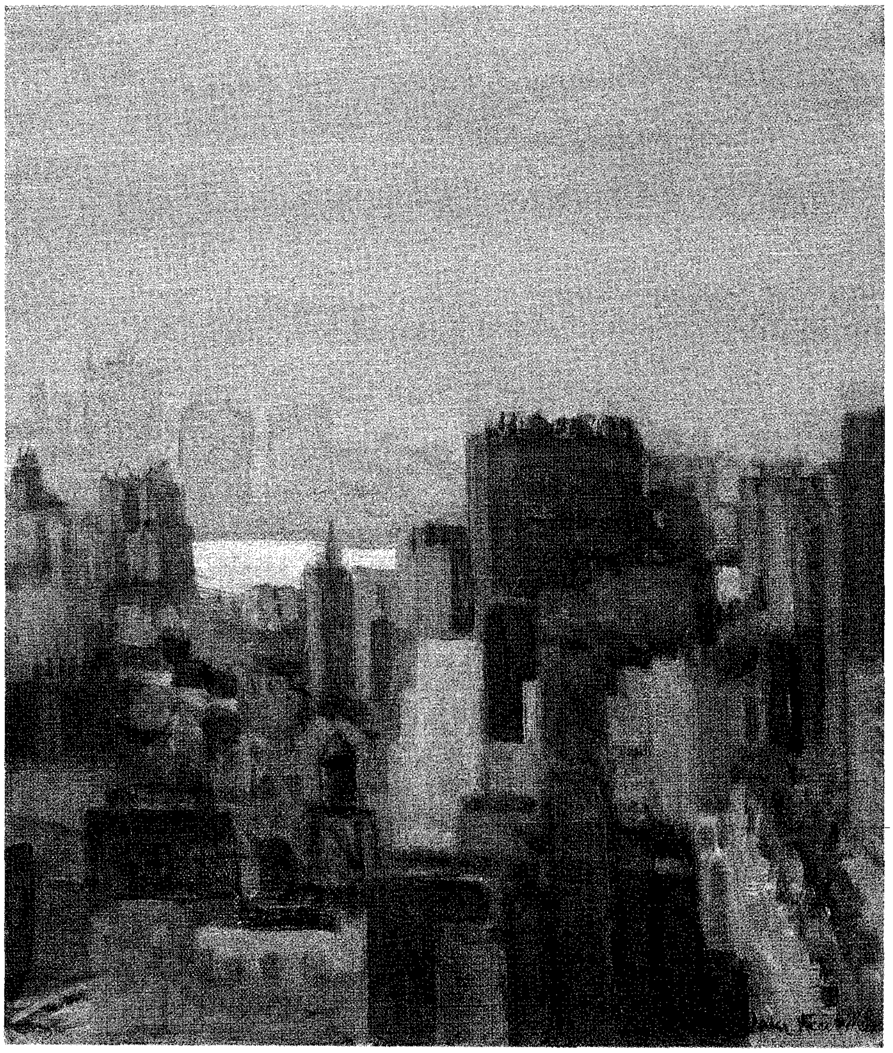
Freilicher's literary circle gave her a close but detached angle on the excitements of Abstract Expressionism. So did the heterodox example of Fairfield Porter, the brilliant painter and critic who, while revering Willem de Kooning, argued that modern art had gone wrong in following Paul Cézanne instead of Édouard Vuillard. Porter's color-based, brushy realism, in pictures of tranquil nature and of bohemian-bourgeois, summer-house domesticity, continues to look better and better. (He died in 1975.) His sternly principled but warm, civilized aestheticism complements rather than contests the noisier advances of American art in his era. Although Freilicher was already set on a stubbornly independent course as a realist in a world dominated by abstract art, she drew strength from Porter. Many other low-profile, mostly New York landscape and figurative painters, did, too, but she seems to me his worthiest peer.

Freilicher's style is remarkable for its rejection of anything cerebral. She values color and tone, over line and shape, as primary sensations of the eye. For example, she strives to render effects of sun and shade on the chilly white façade of the Con Edison tower on East Fourteenth Street; she comes to no conclusion about the building's geometry, even though she has been painting it for years. If Freilicher's drawing seems a bit woozy and even amateurish, it's because she has no faith in drawing's capacity to register sensuous experience. She prefers making honest attempts to describe with immediacy the most indescribable of visual phenomena, such as the colors of shadows amid a jumble of buildings in the shifting light of a hazy late afternoon. Often, she includes in the foreground a steadily lit vase of flowers, whose colors and textures are elusive in their own way.

No painter depicts more economically the desultory scraggle of incident and color that appears in any patch of meadow when you admit your eye's helplessness in sorting it out. A couple of greens stroked into a yellow may say it all. Her work rewards long and repeated looks. (Relax on the circular sofa in the fussy, wood-panelled room of the academy where her cityscapes are hung.) Freilicher's paintings gradually summon fugitive emotions that are beyond words. Foremost for me is a slightly melancholy but secretly smiling spirit of acceptance, conveyed with a casual formality that honors painting's trusty conventions. I am reminded of the title of an O'Hara poem: "In Memory of My Feelings."

Freilicher's choices for her "Artist's Eye" show suggest memories of other people's feelings. Delicate formal contrasts and rhymes and sweet jokes abound in groupings of portraits, self-portraits, landscapes, still-lifes, and nudes. So-so paintings by Junius Allen, Herman Rose, and Jules Guerin—of buildings in New York, Haifa, and Siena—make different uses of warm or cool pastel hues; seen together, they sound an amazing chord. The naked pretty boy in Thomas Dewing's arch-academic "The Sorcerer's Slave" (1877) and the naked pretty girl in Elihu Vedder's "Samson and Delilah" (undated) seem to be comparing notes on the fun of polite prurience. The Icelandic painter Louisa Matthiasdottir's vigorous portrait of herself in overalls seems exasperated to be in the company of so many elegant gentlemen portrayed elegantly by gentlemen artists. Two of these, from the early twentieth century, flank an outrageous self-portrait by Paul Georges, the estimable Romantic realist, who died earlier this year. Pictured in a maroon sweater against a brick-red ground, Georges is a pouty, small-headed man-mountain, daintily holding a little brush in an immense, paw-like hand. ("Suavity to slobbery," Freilicher said to me with evident satisfaction about the evolution in New York male-artist chic.)

Freilicher's wit recalls that of Kenneth Koch, another old friend who died recently. Koch, who, among other things, was a writer of hilarious parodies, said that you can't successfully parody anything you don't like. By placing the Georges next to a 1902 portrait, by one William Thomas Smedley, of the architect Thomas Hastings, debonair in pince-nez, Freilicher achieves a comic effect that vivifies the mannerly panache of an all but forgotten painter. (Old Smedley was a dab hand.) She turns the high-sounding National Academy of Design, a benignly fascinating bastion of snobbery overthrown, into what Lorenz Hart called Manhattan for people in love—a wondrous toy. ♦



In "Afternoon in the City" (2001), Jane Freilicher summons emotions beyond words.

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THE CURRENT CINEMA

OUT OF THE PAST

Godard is back.

BY ANTHONY LANE

The new film from Jean-Luc Godard, "In Praise of Love," is to be released on September 6th. That plan alone strikes me as bold, not to say reckless. Will audiences, caught in a gust of commemorative mourning and resolve, take kindly to a film whose appetite for things American is, let us say, on the meagre side? At one point, a character sits and intones the words "Julia Roberts" and "Hollywood" as if these were evils on which we could all agree. Americans "have no real past," Godard informs us. "They have no memory of their own; their machines do, but they have none personally, so they buy the past of others, especially those who resisted, or they sell talking images." That's telling 'em.

It is worth confronting these murky claims before moving on to the more rewarding murk that fills the rest of the film. How charming, for example, to learn that M. Godard has made no money from the sale of his own talking images; such, at any rate, is the implication of that furious final charge. As for his loathing of Hollywood, it is a regrettable coda to a body of work that, in its greener days, made lavish reference to the Hollywood musical, say, and the iconography of Bogart. Finally, could anyone enlighten me as to the identity of those "machines" of which Godard speaks and, if possible, supply me with a copy of the instruction manual? At least, when Chaplin inveighed against mechanization, in "Modern Times," he saw fit to trap himself in the cogs of a particular specimen; Godard's wrath, by contrast, is dangerously vague. That is why nobody should bother to be insulted. His anti-Americanism is no longer an argument but a reflex: a twitch of old prejudices, untouched by fresh evidence, like the scar of a wound from long ago.

Just what is so new, then, about the new movie? Well, it is divided into two parts; how they fit together, Godard only knows. The first is in black-and-white. It concerns a filmmaker by the name of Edgar (Bruno Putzulu), who is drumming up interest in a film about the four stages of love: meeting, passion, separation, reconciliation. For a while, we are privy to the casting process; one young woman, for instance, reads for the part of Eglantine. At one enrapturing moment, we see the actress in a hat and coat, with a glittering scarf around her throat, and then, a beat later, with her hair unpinned. Further on, we watch her from the side, in a striped top, coiling her hair with one hand—whether unconsciously or prompted by the director, it is hard to say. The point is not that she is beautiful (although she is, in her round-eyed way) but that she looks unnervingly different in every scene, as if auditioning less for a dramatic role than for another life entirely.

Godard's picture is entitled "In Praise of Love," but the truer target of his adulation is time—our need to live in its embrace, to yield to the comedy of its transfigurings, and then, as our bodies wither, to claim that it has no purchase on our souls. He is undoubtedly biased, in this respect, as only a gloomy European could be biased, leaning with ridiculous fervor toward the past and scorning the idea that some people might, with pleasure, ride the surge of time that bears them into the future. One of the loveliest sights, halfway through a film soaked in loveliness, is a travelling shot of the Bois de Boulogne; it marks the climax to a short speech in which we learn

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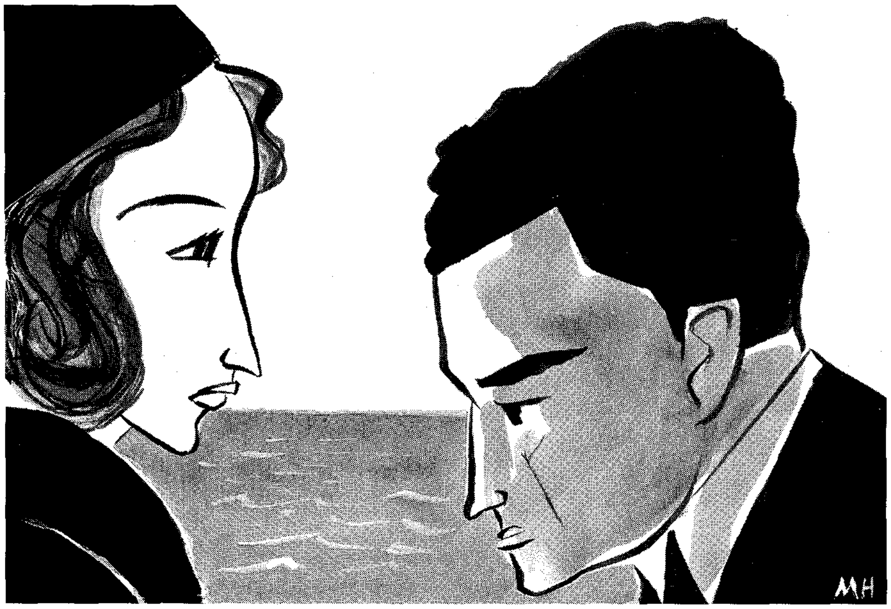
that the Bois forms the remnant of a larger forest that encrusted Paris when, as Lutetia, it was invaded by Julius Caesar. Is the sequence genuinely richer for this reminder, or is Godard unable to resist the lure of historical snobbery?

All this unfolds on 35-mm. monochrome film, wielded with such dexterity by Godard's cinematographers, Christophe Pollock and Julien Hirsch, that you can't help wondering if, despite the movie's title, elegy has drifted in where eulogy fears to tread. The shots of a lonely rower sculling down the Seine, overlaid with a crackly *chanson*, or of the nocturnal gleam of trains in a shunting yard are so exquisite that you are poised to accuse Godard the firebrand of turning into a softie. At this point, just to spite you, he sends the film up in flames: we cut to a boiling orange sea, as violent as anything in Derain or Vlaminck, and from here on "In Praise of Love" is delivered in the saturated glare of digital video. The colors feel like the efflux of a hot temper; look at Edgar, in a blue shirt, strolling beside a verge of green grass, and you think not of pastoral peace but of a mind in turmoil, with a palette to match. What a wag old Godard is: all that classical melancholy, rounded off with the kind of hopped-up image-wrangling that could win him a spot on MTV. He would *love* it there.

We are now in Brittany, two years before the events of the movie's first half; my wish to relate the events of this second half is slightly thwarted by my inability to work out what they are. As usual, a little homework helps. There is no denying that the film will click more easily if you already know of Jean Lacouture, the biographer of de Gaulle, who is interviewed at his home in Brittany, and if you have some grasp of Simone Weil, the religious philosopher—born Jewish, died Catholic, in 1943—on the subject of whom Edgar is currently composing a cantata. There is also a subplot about two heroes of the French Resistance, whose memoirs, or memories, are in the process of being bought by a Hollywood studio; this being Godard, an official from the State Department is also present, just to thicken the sensation that America is on the warpath, and to allow one character to utter the words "Vietnam, Sarajevo." It seems fair to say that any filmmaker who brackets those two names together, as if they told the same tale, is not to be trusted as a political thinker.



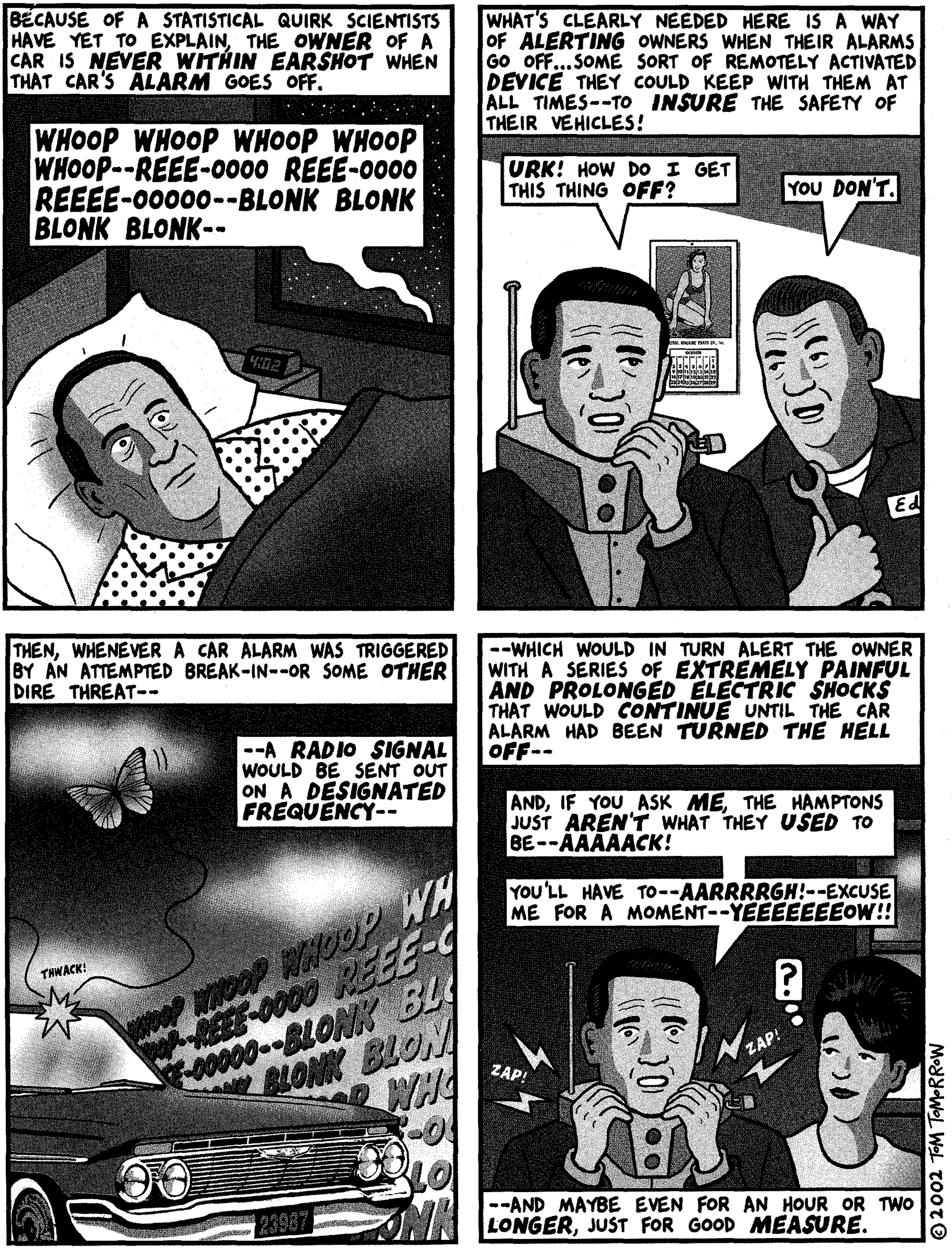
Cécile Camp plays an actress and Bruno Putzulu her director in Godard's new film.

MARCELLUS HALL

But then Godard has never been a thinker, any more than Fellini or Antonioni was; to be a movie director, in the Godardian scheme of things, is far more a calling than a career, and at the age of seventy-one he still makes his job seem like a mixture of pathologist, painter, and bookworm. As with many of those for whom social revolution has failed to deliver on its promises, Godard cannot quite summon the nerve to admit to a Christian conscience; it is there in his lingering shots of Parisian down-and-outs, in his championing of a lived life as opposed to the thinness of mere existence, yet still he prefers to lurk in his shell. "In Praise of Love" is a heartbreaking movie—it sounds like a dirge, with a piano on the soundtrack that keeps striking funereal chords—largely because its maker no longer seems able, or willing, to do his characters the honor of a story. Whether in secrecy or in shame, half of them face away from the lens, or into the shadows, as they mutter their cryptic lines. These creatures are somehow lost, refugees from an unstated strife, but the movie does not offer them a home.

Take Berthe (Cécile Camp). She is the granddaughter of the Resistance heroes; she is the young woman with whom Edgar was obsessed in the first half of the film; and she comes to a sad end. So I am told, anyway; I got that information either from reading secondary material or from those who watched the film more observantly than I did. To my eyes, the whole thing passed in a blur of fabulous collage, and Berthe herself barely registered. In a sense, this attenuation is nothing new; when Godard released "Sauve Qui Peut (La Vie)," in 1979, the film was heralded as his return to drama after a decade of frankly impenetrable experiments. Since then, he has shown us wonderful things, in films such as "Prénom: Carmen" (1984) and "Je Vous Salue, Marie" (1985), but he has never shaken off the soil of his time underground. It sucked the joy out of him for good. This is not a complaint; you could equally point to "The Flaying of Marsyas"—as fluent a painting as Titian ever produced, but streaked with the vengeful and the bitter, and thus with the suggestion that old men have a right to rebuke the lustres of their youth. And so it is with Godard: the new film may be irate, dejected, and full of startling grace, like the senescence of a once magnificent athlete, but, if it's love you want, look elsewhere. There is more desire in a single closeup of Anna Karina, Godard's wife and muse, in "Vivre Sa Vie" (1962) or "Pierrot le Fou" (1965) than in the whole of his recent output, and there is no forgetting, or repeating, the glee with which she—a person, not a page from his notebook of ideas—broke into sudden dance, as if struck by a dream of Fred Astaire. The irony, in the end, could not be more delicious: ask not what Jean-Luc Godard thinks of America but what America did for Godard. ♦

THE BACK PAGE BY TOM TOMORROW


BECAUSE OF A STATISTICAL QUIRK SCIENTISTS HAVE YET TO EXPLAIN, THE **OWNER** OF A CAR IS **NEVER WITHIN EARSHOT** WHEN THAT CAR'S **ALARM** GOES OFF.
WHOOP WHOOP WHOOP WHOOP WHOOP--REEE-OOOO REEE-OOOO REEEE-OOOOO--BLONK BLONK BLONK BLONK--
4:02
WHAT'S CLEARLY NEEDED HERE IS A WAY OF **ALERTING** OWNERS WHEN THEIR ALARMS GO OFF...SOME SORT OF REMOTELY ACTIVATED **DEVICE** THEY COULD KEEP WITH THEM AT ALL TIMES--TO **INSURE** THE SAFETY OF THEIR VEHICLES!
URK! HOW DO I GET THIS THING **OFF**?
YOU **DON'T**.
Ed
THEN, WHENEVER A CAR ALARM WAS TRIGGERED BY AN ATTEMPTED BREAK-IN--OR SOME **OTHER** DIRE THREAT--
--A **RADIO SIGNAL** WOULD BE SENT OUT ON A **DESIGNATED FREQUENCY**--
THWACK!
WHOOP WHOOP WHOOP WH OOP--REEE-OOOO REEE-O EE-OOOOO--BLONK BL BLONK BLONK BLON WHO LO ONK
23987
--WHICH WOULD IN TURN ALERT THE OWNER WITH A SERIES OF **EXTREMELY PAINFUL AND PROLONGED ELECTRIC SHOCKS** THAT WOULD **CONTINUE** UNTIL THE CAR ALARM HAD BEEN **TURNED THE HELL OFF**--
AND, IF YOU ASK **ME**, THE HAMPTONS JUST **AREN'T** WHAT THEY **USED** TO BE--**AAAAACK!**
YOU'LL HAVE TO--**AARRRRGH!**--EXCUSE ME FOR A MOMENT--**YEEEEEEEOW!!**
?
ZAP!
ZAP!
--AND MAYBE EVEN FOR AN HOUR OR TWO **LONGER**, JUST FOR GOOD **MEASURE**.
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billions of dollars
in personal assets are
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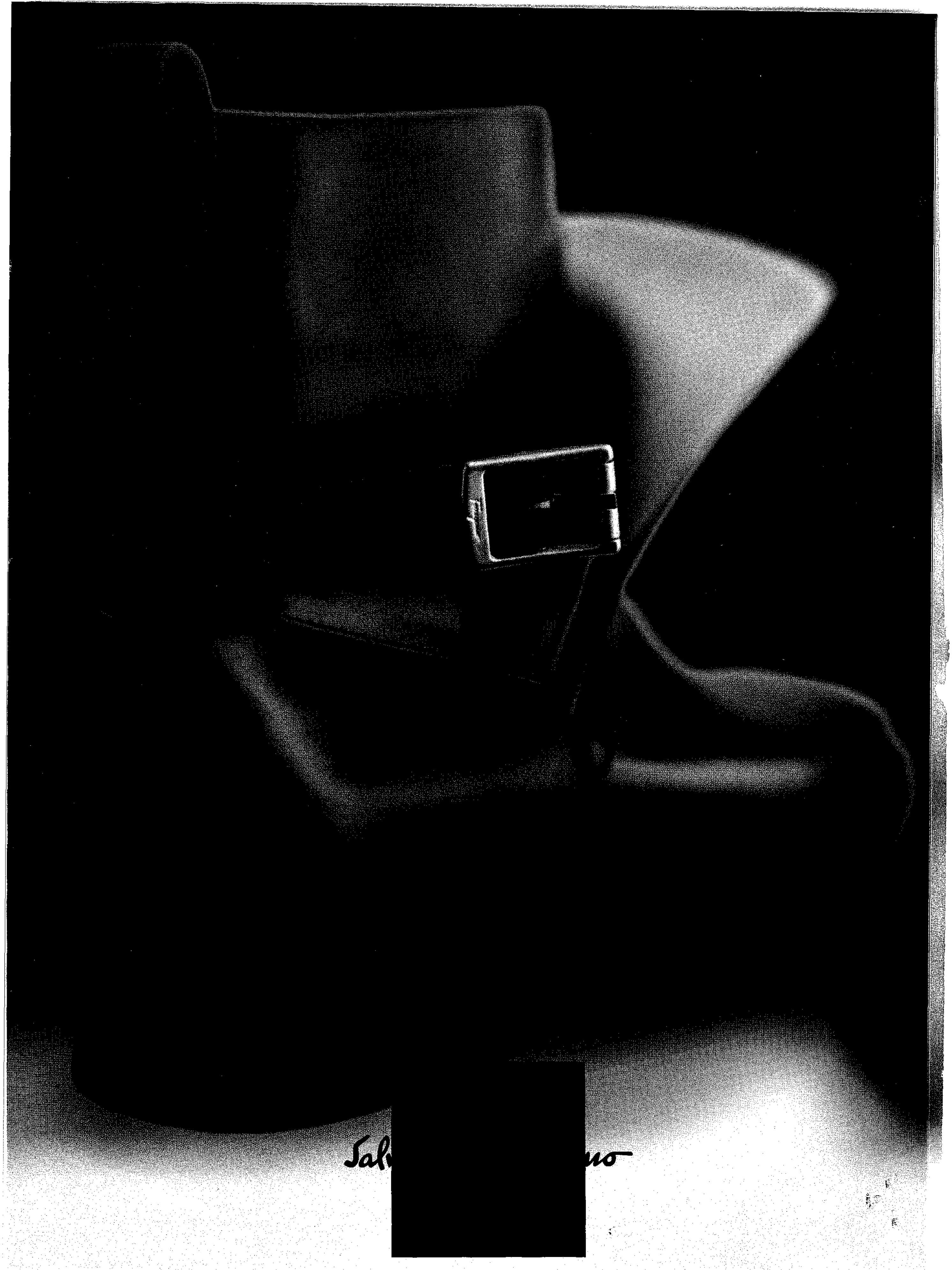

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